AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

From the Earliest Times to the Present Day

BY

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'THE CHURCH AND THE PURITANS,' ETC.

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TO THE MEMORY OF

AUBREY LACKINGTON MOORE

IN WHOSE GIFTED NATURE

THEOLOGICAL STRENGTH, PHILOSOPHICAL WISDOM

AND HISTORICAL INSIGHT

ORDERED BY SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE

COMBINED TO INTERPRET

THE MIND OF GOD

IN LOYAL SERVICE TO THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

'Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom;
and to depart from evil is understanding.'

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PREFACE

I HAVE attempted in this volume to write a book which may be found more interesting by the general reader and learner than a manual or text-book usually is, and at the same time may do something to stimulate those who are desirous of a comprehensive knowledge of the subject to study it in works of greater size and more solid attainment. My object has therefore been to draw a picture of the development of the Church of England rather than to detail her history, to explain rather than to chronicle—in fact, to give an answer, in a short and convenient form, to the question so often asked, How is it that the Church of England has come to be what she is? I have accordingly endeavoured to fix the attention of the reader upon that which has proved to be permanent in the history of the Church, and to avoid burdening his memory with facts and details which, though often very important and interesting in themselves, have not had a lasting influence upon her fortunes. Thus I have laid particular stress upon those periods in the history of the English Church in which she was occupying new ground, influenced by new ideas, working under new conditions, adapting herself to new needs, such as the periods of her establishment in the seventh and eighth centuries, her development under Norman

influence in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, her reformation in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and her revival in the nineteenth century. I have passed more quickly over periods of comparative rest like the fourteenth century, or of deterioration like the ninth, the fifteenth, and the eighteenth centuries, and episodes like the reign of Mary, and the period of the Commonwealth and Protectorate, which in my view are of the nature of interruptions in the story of her continuous growth.

In dealing with the centuries subsequent to the Reformation I have found it impossible to avoid the use of the much-abused terms Catholic and Protestant. Accordingly, in order to avoid confusion, I may explain that I have used the word Catholic throughout to mean those conceptions of the religion of Christ which are in sympathy with historical Christianity—*i.e.* with the Christian Church as it is found in history up to the sixteenth century as a fact—and the word Protestant to mean those conceptions of the religion of Christ which are in sympathy with the views set forth by the German and Swiss reformers of the sixteenth century. Some points about which controversy has of late been exceptionally active have been dealt with in special notes.

Frequent references will necessarily be found in the text to the facts of English political and constitutional history and of historical geography. I have not thought it necessary to explain these by notes, as I have assumed that a text-book of English history and a historical atlas will be accessible to the reader.

My best thanks are due to the many kind friends who

have assisted me with their advice and criticism, especially to the Rev. Walter Lock, D.D., of Keble College, and the Rev. F. E. Brightman, M.A., of the Pusey House, to whom the notes on the Eucharistic doctrines of the sixteenth century and on Anglican Orders owe what value they possess, and to the Rev. W. H. Hutton, Vice-President of S. John's College, Oxford, who has given much valuable time to the reading and correction of the whole work in manuscript, and has greatly enhanced its usefulness by his suggestions.

H. O. W.

All Souls College,
Sept. 1896.

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CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

B.C.	55	First invasion of Britain by Julius Cæsar.
A.D.	84	Conquest of Britain by Agricola.
	121	Building of Hadrian's Wall.
Before	200	Planting of the Church in Roman Britain.
A.D.	305	Martyrdom of S. Alban.
	314	Council of Arles.
	325	Council of Nicæa.
	347	Council of Sardica.
	359	Council of Ariminum.
	397	Mission of S. Ninian in Galloway.
	401	Withdrawal of the Roman Legions from Britain.
	410	Release of the Britons from their allegiance to the Emperor.
	429	Visit of SS. Lupus and Germanus to confute Pelagianism.
	449	Landing of the Jutes in Kent.
	463	Death of S. Patrick.
	477	Foundation of the kingdom of the South Saxons.
	495	Foundation of the kingdom of the West Saxons.
	547	Foundation of the kingdom of the Northumbrians.
	563	Foundation of the monastery of Iona by S. Columba.
	597	Planting of the Church in Kent by S. Augustine.
	603	Interview of S. Augustine and the Welsh bishops.
	604	Foundation of the English sees of London and Rochester.
		Death of S. Augustine.
	616	Banishment of Mellitus, bishop of London.
	627	Planting of the Church in Northumbria by Paulinus.
	631	Planting of the Church in East Anglia by Felix.
	633	Victory of Penda at Heathfield.
		Flight of Paulinus.
	634	Planting of the Church in Wessex by Birinus.
	635	Victory of Oswald at Heaven-field.
		Mission of S. Aidan to Northumbria.
	642	Victory of Penda at Maserfeld. Death of Oswald.
	651	Death of S. Aidan.
	655	Victory of Oswiu at Winwaed. Death of Penda.
	664	Conference at Whitby.

A.D. 666 Consecration of S. Chad as bishop of York.
668 Consecration of Theodore as archbishop of Canterbury.
669 S. Chad becomes bishop of Lichfield, Wilfrid bishop of York.
673 Synod of Hertford.
678 Division of the Northumbrian diocese. Appeal of Wilfrid.
684 Banishment of Wilfrid. He evangelises Sussex.
685 Consecration of S. Cuthbert as bishop of Lindisfarne.
687 Death of S. Cuthbert.
Reconciliation between Theodore and Wilfrid.
690 Death of Theodore.
Quarrel between Aldfrid and Wilfrid. Second banishment of Wilfrid.
696 Consecration of Willibrord as archbishop of the Frisians.
702 Assembly at Easterfield. Second appeal of Wilfrid.
706 Restoration of Wilfrid to the diocese of Hexham.
709 Death of Wilfrid.
Establishment of the see of Selsey.
734 Egbert made archbishop of York.
735 Death of the Venerable Bede.
739 Death of Willibrord.
747 Council of Cloveshoo.
755 Martyrdom of Boniface (Winfrid) the apostle of Germany.
787 Council of Chelsea. Lichfield made into an archbishopric.
794 Jarrow and Lindisfarne ravaged by the Northmen.
803 Council of Cloveshoo. Abolition of the archbishopric of Lichfield.
825 Battle of Ellandun.
827 Egbert of Wessex becomes king of the English.
836 Beginning of the invasions of the Danes.
847 Accession of Æthelwulf.
858 Accession of Æthelbald.
860 Accession of Æthelbert.
866 Accession of Æthelred.
870 Capture of East Anglia by the Danes. Martyrdom of S. Eadmund.
871 Attack of the Danes upon Wessex.
Accession of Ælfred.
878 Victory of Ælfred at Ethandun.
Peace of Wedmore.
901 Accession of Eadward the Elder.
909 Formation of the sees of Ramsbury, Crediton, and Wells.
922 Submission of England south of the Humber to Eadward.
925 Accession of Æthelstan.
937 Battle of Brunanburh. Submission of Northumbria to Æthelstan.
940 Accession of Eadmund.

A.D.	940	Dunstan made abbot of Glastonbury.
	942	Archbishop Odo professed a Benedictine monk at Fleury.
	946	Accession of Eadred.
	955	Accession of Eadwig.
	959	Accession of Eadgar the Peaceful.
		Dunstan made archbishop of Canterbury.
	961	Consecration of Ælfstan and Oswald to London and Worcester.
	963	Consecration of Æthelwold to Winchester.
	975	Accession of Eadward the Martyr.
	979	Accession of Æthelred the Redeless.
	988	Death of Dunstan.
	995	The see of Lindisfarne finally established at Durham.
	1012	Martyrdom of archbishop Ælfeah.
	1016	Accession of Eadmund Ironsides.
		Battle of Assandun. Partition of the kingdom.
	1017	Death of Eadmund. Cnut sole king.
	1020	Godwine made earl of Wessex.
	1028	Letter of Cnut from Rome.
	1035	Accession of Harold Harefoot.
	1040	Accession of Harthacnut.
	1042	Accession of Eadward the Confessor.
	1051	Robert of Jumièges made archbishop of Canterbury.
	1052	Expulsion of Robert and the Normans.
		Stigand made archbishop of Canterbury.
	1053	Death of Godwine. Harold virtual ruler of the kingdom.
	1063	Defeat of Gruffydd by Harold.
	1064	Oath of Harold to William the Norman.
	1065	Consecration of the Abbey of S. Peter at Westminster.
	1066	Accession of Harold.
		Battle of Stamford Bridge (Sept. 25).
		Battle of Senlac (Oct. 14).
		Coronation of William the Conqueror (Dec. 25).
	1068	Conquest of the west.
	1069	Conquest of the north.
	1070	Deposition of Stigand by the Papal Legate.
		Lanfranc appointed archbishop of Canterbury by William I.
	1071	Conquest of the fen country.
	1075	Council at S. Paul's. The removal of sees to towns.
	1076	Council at Winchester. Enforcement of clerical celibacy.
		Refusal of fealty to the pope by William.
	1086	Completion of the Domesday survey.
		Separation of the ecclesiastical from the temporal courts.
	1087	Accession of William II.
	1089	Death of Lanfranc.
	1092	Conquest of Cumberland by William II.

A.D. 1093	Anselm appointed archbishop of Canterbury.
1095	Council at Rockingham.
1097	First exile of Anselm.
1099	Council at the Lateran.
1100	Accession of Henry I.
	Issue of a charter of liberties. Return of Anselm.
1102	Council at Westminster.
1103	Quarrel about investitures. Second exile of Anselm.
1107	Council at London. Settlement of the investiture question.
	Appointment by the English crown to the bishopric of Llandaff.
1109	Foundation of the see of Ely.
	Death of Anselm.
1115	Appointment by the English crown to the bishopric of S. David's.
1125	Legatine council at Westminster under John of Crema.
1133	Foundation of the see of Carlisle.
1135	Accession of Stephen.
1139	Quarrel between Stephen and the bishops.
1139-1153	Civil war and anarchy.
1154	Accession of Henry II.
1162	Thomas Becket appointed archbishop of Canterbury.
1163	Quarrel between Henry and Becket.
1164	The Constitutions of Clarendon.
	Council at Northampton. Flight of Becket.
1170	Reconciliation of Henry and Becket at Freteval.
	Murder of Becket at Canterbury.
1174	Penance of Henry at Canterbury.
1176	Modification of the Constitutions of Clarendon.
1186	S. Hugh appointed bishop of Lincoln.
1189	Accession of Richard I.
1199	Accession of John.
1205	Disputed election to Canterbury.
1207	Consecration of Stephen Langton by Innocent III.
1208-1213	Quarrel between John and Innocent.
1213	Submission of John. England becomes a fief of the papacy.
	The assembly at S. Paul's.
1215	Granting of the Great Charter by John.
	Council of the Lateran.
	Innocent III. absolves John from his promise and suspends Stephen Langton.
1216	Accession of Henry III.
1216-1227	Regency of Pembroke and Hubert de Burgh.
1219	Arrival of the Dominican Friars in England.
1224	Arrival of the Franciscan Friars in England.
1229	Extortionate papal taxation of the clergy.

A.D. 1231	Claim of Provisions made by the pope.
1232	Dismissal of Hubert de Burgh.
1237	Legatine council at London under Otho.
1256	Claim of annates made by the pope.
1258-1265	The barons under Simon de Montfort assume the government.
1268	Legatine council at S. Paul's under Ottobon.
1272	Accession of Edward I.
1279	The Statute *de Religiosis* passed.
1283	Organisation of the Convocations of the Clergy.
	The Statute *Circumspecte Agatis* passed.
1295	Organisation of the nation in Parliament.
1296	Quarrel between archbishop Winchilsey and Edward I.
1297	The Confirmation of the Charters.
1301	Parliament of Lincoln.
1303	Collapse of the Hildebrandine papacy.
1305-1377	The Avignonese Captivity.
1307	Parliament of Carlisle.
	Accession of Edward II.
1308	Suppression of the Knights Templar.
1310	Appointment of the lords ordainers.
1316	The Statute *Articuli cleri* passed.
1327	Accession of Edward III.
1341	Appointment of a layman (Robert Bourchier) to be Chancellor.
1349	The Black Death.
1351	The first statute of Provisors passed.
1353	The first statute of Præmunire passed.
1366	Final repudiation of fealty to the pope.
1371	Attack in Parliament upon clerical ministers.
1377	Accession of Richard II.
1378	Beginning of the Great Schism.
1381	The Peasants' revolt.
1382	Condemnation of Wicliffe.
1386	The lords appellant.
1390	Final act of Provisors.
1393	Final act of Præmunire.
1399	Accession of Henry IV.
1401	The Statute *de Heretico* passed.
	Execution of Sawtre.
1409	The Council of Pisa.
1410	Petition of the Commons for the disendowment of the higher clergy.
1413	Accession of Henry V.
1414	The Lollard Act passed.
	The Council of Constance.
1417	End of the Great Schism. Election of Martin V.

A.D. 1422	Accession of Henry VI.
1426	Demand by Martin V. for the repeal of the anti-papal statutes.
1427	Cardinal Beaufort made papal Legate.
1431	Council of Basel.
1455-1471	Wars of the Roses.
1461	Accession of Edward IV.
1483	Accession of Richard III.
1485	Battle of Bosworth Field.
	Accession of Henry VII.
1501	Marriage of Prince Arthur to Catherine of Arragon.
1509	Accession of Henry VIII.
	Marriage of Henry VIII. to Catherine of Arragon.
1521	Lutheran books burned at S. Paul's.
1526	Introduction into England of Tyndale's New Testament.
	Commencement of negotiations with the pope for the divorce.
1527	The sack of Rome.
1529	The divorce cause advoked to Rome.
1530	Death of Wolsey.
1531	The recognition of the supremacy by the Convocations.
1532	The Act in restraint of the payment of annates.
	The supplication against the Ordinaries.
	The submission of the clergy.
1533	Cranmer made archbishop of Canterbury.
	Decision of the Convocations in favour of the divorce.
	The Act in restraint of Appeals.
	The divorce pronounced by Cranmer.
	Burning of Frith and Hewitt.
1534	Act of the submission of the clergy.
	The scriptural prerogative of the papacy denied by Convocation.
	Act to put a stop to dispensations, etc., from Rome.
	Decision of the pope against the divorce.
	Act of succession in Anne Boleyn and her children.
	The Verbal Treasons Act.
	The Supreme Head Act.
1535	Burning of fourteen Anabaptists.
	Execution of Fisher and More.
	Execution of the Carthusians.
	Appointment of Cromwell to be vicar-general.
	Visitation of the religious houses begun.
	Bull of excommunication of Henry VIII. prepared.
1536	Act vesting the smaller religious houses in the king.
	Divorce and execution of Anne Boleyn.
	Act of succession in Jane Seymour and her children.
	Act finally repudiating papal authority.
	The Pilgrimage of Grace.

A.D.	1536	Authorisation of the use of Coverdale's Bible.
		The Ten Articles.
	1537	The Bishops' Book.
	1538	Authorisation of the Great Bible by the King.
		Burning of Lambert for Zwinglian opinions.
		Injunctions of Cromwell against superstitiously used images, etc.
	1539	Act confirming the suppression of all the religious houses.
		Act of the Six Articles.
		Execution of Lady Exeter and fourteen others by Act of Attainder.
	1540	Execution of Cromwell by Act of Attainder.
		Burning of Barnes, Jerome, and Gerard for Lutheran opinions.
	1543	The King's Book.
	1544	Publication of the Litany in English.
	1545	Act granting colleges, chantries, and free chapels to the king.
		Issue of the authorised Primer.
	1546	Burning of Anne Askew for Zwinglian opinions.
	1547	Accession of Edward VI. Government in the hands of Somerset and the Council.
		Publication of the Homilies and of the Injunctions against pictures of feigned miracles.
		General visitation by the Council.
		Repeal of the Treason Acts of Henry VIII. and the Act of the Six Articles.
		Act against irreverent speaking against the Sacrament.
	1548	Order of Council to take away images.
		The Order of Communion published.
		Appointment of Bucer and Peter Martyr to Cambridge and Oxford.
		Imprisonment of Gardiner.
	1549	The first Prayer-book of Edward VI. First Act of Uniformity.
		Act permitting clerical marriage.
		Deprivation of Bonner.
		Supersession of Somerset by Warwick.
		Act for the destruction of the Latin service books.
	1550	Publication of the Ordinal.
		Destruction of Altars.
		Publication of Cranmer's Treatise on the Eucharist.
	1551	Deprivation of Heath and Day.
	1552	Deprivation of Gardiner.
		Second Prayer-book of Edward VI. Second Act of Uniformity.
	1553	The Forty-two Articles, the Catechism and Primer.
		Failure of Northumberland's revolution.
		Accession of Mary.
		Restoration of the deprived bishops.
	1554	Marriage of Philip and Mary.

A.D. 1554	Repeal of the anti-papal statutes.
	Reconciliation of England to the papacy.
1555-1558	The Marian persecutions. Burning of Cranmer, Hooper, Ridley, Latimer, and about 300 others, mainly for Zwinglian opinions
1558	Accession of Elizabeth.
1559	The Act of Supremacy and third Act of Uniformity.
	Revision of the Prayer-book.
	Publication of the Injunctions explaining the supremacy.
	Consecration of Parker and eleven bishops.
1563	The Thirty-nine Articles agreed upon by Convocation.
1566	The Advertisements of Parker.
1568	Imprisonment of Mary Queen of Scots.
	Foundation of the seminary at Douai.
1570	Publication of the bull of deposition by Pius V.
1571	Promulgation of the Thirty-nine Articles.
1571-1606	Penal statutes passed against Roman Catholics.
1572	Publication of the First and Second Admonitions by Cartwright.
	Ridolphi's plot.
1576	Grindal made archbishop of Canterbury.
1577	Suppression of the Prophesyings.
1580	Publication of the Book of Discipline by Cartwright and Travers.
1581	The Jesuit mission to England.
1582	Attempt to establish presbyterianism in England.
1583	Whitgift made archbishop of Canterbury.
1584	Imposition of the oath *ex officio*.
	Attempt to establish a presbyterian system through Parliament
1585	Publication of Whitgift's canons.
1586	Conspiracy of Babington.
1587	Execution of Mary Queen of Scots.
1588	The Spanish Armada.
	The Martin Marprelate libels.
1593	Act of Parliament banishing nonconformists.
1594	Publication of Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*.
1595	The Lambeth Articles drawn up.
1603	Accession of James I.
1604	The Hampton Court Conference.
	Publication of the Canons.
	Bancroft made archbishop of Canterbury.
1605	Lancelot Andrewes made a bishop.
1610	George Abbot made archbishop of Canterbury.
1611	The authorised version of the Bible published.
1621	William Laud made a bishop.
1625	Accession of Charles I.
1628	The declaration prefixed to the Articles.
	The remonstrance against the Arminians.

A.D.	1633	Laud made archbishop of Canterbury.
	1634	His metropolitical visitation.
	1640	Passing of new Canons in Convocation. The *et cætera* oath.
		Meeting of the Long Parliament.
		Condemnation of the Canons. Ejectment of scandalous ministers.
	1641	Abolition of the High Commission Court.
	1642	The bishops excluded from Parliament.
	1643	The Solemn League and Covenant.
		Calling of the Westminster Assembly.
	1645	Suppression of the Book of Common Prayer.
		Execution of archbishop Laud.
	1646	Establishment of Presbyterianism.
		Adoption of the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms.
	1649	Execution of Charles I.
	1654	Appointment by Cromwell of the Committee of Triers and the committees of scandalous ministers.
	1655	Private use of the Prayer-book forbidden.
	1660	Restoration of the Church and the Monarchy.
		Juxon made archbishop of Canterbury.
	1661	The Savoy Conference.
		The Corporation Act passed.
	1662	Revision of the Prayer-book. Fourth Act of Uniformity.
		Establishment of nonconformist bodies.
		Completion of the Reformation.
	1663	Sheldon made archbishop of Canterbury.
	1664	The Conventicle Act passed.
	1665	The Five Mile Act passed.
	1666	The great fire of London.
	1672	The Declaration of Indulgence issued by Charles.
	1673	The Test Act passed.
		Rebuilding of S. Paul's Cathedral begun.
	1677	Sancroft made archbishop of Canterbury.
	1685	Accession of James II.
		Suppression of the Test Act.
	1686	Appointment of a Court of High Commission by prerogative.
	1687	Attack on the Universities.
		Issue of the Declaration of Indulgence by James II.
	1688	Order to publish the Declaration of Indulgence.
		Refusal and trial of the Seven Bishops.
		Flight of James II.
	1689	Accession of William and Mary.
		Attempt to pass a Comprehension Bill through Parliament.
		Passing of the Toleration Act.
		Expulsion of the Nonjurors.
	1691	Tillotson made archbishop of Canterbury.

A.D. 1693	Death of Sancroft.
1694	Tenison made archbishop of Canterbury.
1698	Foundation of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.
1700	Act for preventing the growth of Popery.
1701	Foundation of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.
1701-1709	Quarrel between the two Houses of the Convocation of Canterbury.
1704	Establishment of Queen Anne's Bounty.
1710	Impeachment of Dr. Sacheverell.
	Passing of the Occasional Conformity and the Schism Acts.
1714	Accession of George I.
1717	The Bangorian Controversy.
	Suppression of the Convocations.
1718	Repeal of the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts.
1727	Accession of George II. First Annual Act passed in relief of breaches of the Test Act.
1729	Formation of John Wesley's Society at Oxford.
1738	Conversion of John Wesley.
1739	Formation of the Methodist Societies.
1744	First Wesleyan Conference.
1760	Accession of George III.
1778	Catholic Relief Act passed.
1781	Separation of Lady Huntingdon's Connexion.
	Organisation of Sunday Schools by Raikes.
1784	Consecration of Bishop Seabury of Connecticut.
1784	Wesleyan superintendents for America set apart by John Wesley.
1799	Foundation of the Religious Tract Society.
	Foundation of the Church Missionary Society.
1804	Foundation of the British and Foreign Bible Society.
1807	Abolition of the Slave Trade.
1813	The Unitarian Relief Act passed.
1820	Accession of George IV.
1827	Accession of William IV.
	Publication of the *Christian Year*.
1828	Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts.
1829	The Catholic Emancipation Act.
1833	Act for the Emancipation of Slaves.
	Dr. Arnold's pamphlet on Church Reform.
	Mr. Keble's Assize Sermon.
	The *Tracts for the Times*.
1834	Dr. Pusey joins the Tractarians.
1835	Dr. Hampden appointed Regius Professor of Divinity.
1836	Consecration of a bishop of Australia.
	Appointment of the Ecclesiastical Commission.
	Dr. Arnold's article in the *Edinburgh Review*.

A.D. 1837	Accession of Queen Victoria.
	Newman's Letters on Romanism and Popular Protestantism.
	Publication of Froude's *Remains*.
1840	Passing of the Church Discipline Act.
	Publication of Tract XC.
	End of the *Tracts for the Times*.
1841	Consecration of bishop Selwyn to New Zealand.
1844	Condemnation of W. G. Ward at Oxford.
1845	Secession of Newman.
1847	Consecration of bishop Gray to Cape Town.
1852	Revival of Convocation.
	The Gorham judgment.
1856	Prosecution of archdeacon Denison.
1860	The Essays and Reviews judgment.
1867	The first Lambeth Conference.
1868-1877	The Ritual Prosecutions.
1870	Opening of Keble College.
	Passing of the Education Act.
1871	Passing of the University Tests Act.
1874	Passing of the Public Worship Regulation Act.
1881	Appointment of the Ecclesiastical Courts Commission.
1892	Judgment in the bishop of Lincoln's Case.
1893	Appointment of archbishops in Canada.

CHAPTER I

THE CHURCH IN BRITAIN

A.D. 200–597

No one knows when the Church was first planted in Britain, but from passages in the works of Tertullian and Origen, written between A.D. 208 and 240, it seems clear that it had been introduced into the Roman province of Britain by the beginning of the third century. Perhaps it came over the sea with the soldiers who set up the camps and made the roads which still excite our wonder in so many parts of our island. More probably it came in the wake of the rich civilians of Gaul who built their villas at Silchester or Verulam, bathed in the medicinal waters of Bath, or ate the finest oysters which the world produced at Chichester or Canterbury. However it was introduced, it is certain that it has left but few traces of its existence behind it either in buildings or in literature. Still, scanty as such memorials are, they are sufficient to present a fairly vivid picture of what the infant Church in the extreme limits of Roman civilisation must have been during the last two centuries of the rule of the Roman emperors of the west.

Planting of the Church in Britain before 200 A.D.

It was a poor and struggling Church, which exercised but little influence over the Celtic inhabitants of the country—the Church mainly of the poorer Roman provincials. It derived its existence, its ritual, and its orders from its richer neighbour, the Church of Gaul. During two hundred years of life under the Roman eagles it produced no great man, built no great building, endured no

The Church in Roman Britain 200-410.

serious persecution, sent out no missionaries, and was obliged to appeal to Gaul for help in its internal difficulties. So poor was it that, at the council of Ariminum held in the year 359, the British bishops were the only bishops who accepted the allowance for expenses offered by the emperor. So insignificant was it that its leaders were unable of themselves to overcome the heresy of Pelagius at the beginning of the fifth century, but were obliged to summon Germanus of Auxerre and Lupus of Troyes from Gaul for the purpose. Nevertheless, it was a duly settled and regularly organised branch of the Catholic Church. It certainly possessed bishops at London and York, and probably at either Lincoln or Caerleon on Usk, possibly at both places. Its bishops were duly summoned to assist at the great councils of the Church held in the fourth century, and were present at the council of Arles in 314 and of Ariminum in 359. They gave their formal assent to the decisions of the councils of Nicæa in 325 and of Sardica in 347, if they were not present in person. In the year 304, during the persecution of Diocletian, S. Alban, a convert of a day, sealed with his blood his new-found faith, and entered into the ranks of the saints as the proto-martyr of Britain. At Canterbury, Dover, and Silchester are remains of churches built during the Roman occupation. At a few other places in the country have been found inscriptions of a possibly Christian character. The discovery of these remains proves beyond doubt the existence of the Church in Britain during the Roman occupation. Their character points equally clearly to the conclusion that its numbers were too few, its means too scanty, and its learning too mediocre, for it to be a power in the land either among the governing classes of the Roman provincials or among the masses of the Celtic population. Even its one saint, the proto-martyr S. Alban, noble as was his death, seems to have owed his martyrdom more to his interference with the course of Roman justice than to his religious opinions.

On the framework of these scanty facts poetry and legend in after ages have spun their subtle web. S. Paul himself has been claimed as the apostle of the British, and the orders of the

Celtic Church derived from his Welsh companion Aristobulus. Bran the Blessed, the father of Caractacus, is said to have taken back into his native country from the prisons of Rome the blessings of the true faith. From the cloak of S. Alban has sprung a fellow-Christian and a fellow-martyr, S. Amphibalus. Round the ancient British church, built of wattle and daub amid the marshes of Avalon, known to future ages as Glastonbury, gathered holy and tender associations which at length gave birth to the most beautiful of mediæval romances. Woven partly from the old pagan legends of Germany and partly from Christian tradition, the story told how, after the consummation of the sacrifice of Calvary and the burial of Lord Jesus, Joseph of Arimathea with twelve companions set out from the accursed city of Jerusalem, bearing with them the holy cup,

Legend of Joseph of Arimathea.

> 'the cup itself from which our Lord
> Drank at the last sad supper with His own,'

and coming to the isle of Avalon received from the heathen prince Aviragus

> 'an isle of marsh whereon to build,
> And there he built with wattles from the marsh
> A little lonely church in days of yore,'

and planting there his staff as a sign that his pilgrimage was over, lo it took root, and, throwing out bright leaves and tender shoots, it grew into a tree of thorn, which every year as Christmas day came round, and the mystery of the Incarnation was being celebrated in the adjoining church, burst into blossom, caring not for snow or frost, in perpetual remembrance of the Infant Christ. And so, nourished by the influence of the Holy Grail and the miraculous thorn, true Christian faith and life flourished and grew among the islands and the marshes, until the sad days came when the times grew evil, and faith and purity and love fled from the turbulent earth, and men turned back again to their lust and their sin, and there was no place left for the Holy Grail in so degenerate a world. Caught away to heaven it disappeared from ordinary sight, but still from time to time to the saintly and the pure was vouchsafed the vision of the Holy

Cup, with its heavenly music and its sacred memories, to reward the conquest of passion and the mastery of self.

Gracious and touching as some of these legends are, the truth of history compels us to admit that they have no foundation in fact. Christianity in Britain during the Roman occupation can boast neither apostolic origin nor vigorous life. But with the closing years of the fourth century came a great change. As the influence of Rome diminished, the Church seemed to awake more and more to her responsibilities towards the Celtic population. The mission of S. Ninian in 397, and the foundation by him of a missionary bishopric among the Celts, with its seat in the new stone church and monastery of Whithern in Galloway, stirred up fresh life and formed a centre of missionary work in the extreme northern parts of Roman Britain which had hitherto been little touched by Christianity. A few years later, the controversy which arose at the beginning of the fifth century about the doctrines of Pelagius, and the successful vindication of the catholic faith against the British Pelagians by S. Germanus and S. Lupus, roused a new interest in religion in the south and west of the island. About the same time, the labours of S. Patrick established the Church on a firm and lasting foundation in the neighbouring country of Ireland. All over the British islands during the fifth century Christianity was making its way among the Celts, in dependence upon the individual personal gifts of great men like S. Ninian, S. Germanus, and S. Patrick. Schools were formed round great teachers, homes of a rude religious life established by great saints, churches built and bishoprics founded by great leaders. The magic of personal influence, not the strength of sturdy institutions, was the inspiring force. Under it grew up in the fifth and sixth centuries a Church, loose and ill-jointed in organisation and government, but instinct with personal holiness, inspired by missionary zeal, and imbued with a passion for learning, which was able to keep the torch of the Christian faith alive in the north of Europe amid the torrent of heathen invasion which was pouring itself forth upon the civilised world.

Religious revival, c. 400.

The fifth century was a critical one in the history of religion. As the Roman power in the west became weaker and weaker, horde followed horde of barbarians in quick succession from the forests and plains of central and eastern Europe, eager to seize upon the fat and well-cultivated fields of the Roman world. Goth and Vandal, Hun and Lombard, Burgundian, Frank and Saxon, issued from the darkness, and poured down upon Italy and Spain and Africa and Gaul. For a few years the fate of the world hung in the balance, then slowly the power of Christ and the majesty of Roman government asserted themselves. The proud head and the passionate heart of the barbarian bent before the authority of law and the discipline of Christ. Physical strength and hot animal life recognised and accepted moral government as the first condition of progress and the first teaching of truth. Civilisation, reinvigorated by the new and impetuous vigour of the barbarian races, went boldly forward on its sacred mission to mankind, freed from the degradations of effete imperial Rome, but resting on the basis of ordered Roman governance, and inspired by the discipline of the Catholic Church. The lesson was a hard one to learn. It took many centuries to fuse Christian morals and Roman polity with the barbarian temperament and institutions. The problems of the Middle Ages mainly arose from the alternating wars and alliances of these great forces. During the fifth century – the century which ushers in the Middle Ages—the struggle was most intense in western Europe. Stretching over western Christendom from the Rhine to the Sahara, lay the hosts of the barbarians, like a black pall embracing Gaul and northern Italy, Spain and western Africa, in its folds. The best of them were but recently Christian, and many of those heretical in faith. Some of them were but nominally Christian, some still avowedly pagan. South of this zone of half civilisation came what remained of the Roman empire of the west, with its miserable parody of life, already shivering in ignoble safety amid the marshes of Ravenna. Its

Danger to the Church from the barbarians.

State of the Church in the fifth century.

successor at Rome, the inheritor of its capacity for rule, and the only active force amid the decay of civilisation, was the Church of the west, which, under its chief bishop, was just beginning to put forth its hand dimly in search of sovereignty and supremacy. In the north, cut off by the sea and the barbarian invasion from Rome and Constantinople alike, was the small group of Celtic Churches which were springing into vigorous life, just as they were being severed from all contact with the ecclesiastical traditions and principles of ordered government which it was the special mission of Rome to implant in the human race. As the century progressed, and the heathen Franks overran Gaul, and the heathen Saxon tribes from north Germany made their way into Britain, this separation became complete. The Catholic Church in the west became practically split up into two great sections. One of these had its centre at Rome, drew its inspiration from the culture and discipline of the imperial city, its strength from the traditions of an apostolic see, and exercised an influence none the less real, because often fitful and resented, over her barbarian conquerors throughout western Europe. The other, driven back to the islands and hills of Ireland, Scotland, and Celtic England, developed singular powers of personal saintliness and missionary self-sacrifice among her uncultured and undisciplined children. From the union of the two the Church of England derived its full and matured life.

Such, then, was the condition of the Church in the middle of the fifth century, when the Saxon and English heathen pirates first made their presence known. The British Church was one of a group of Churches, of which that of Ireland was the strongest, which mainly depended for their influence on the religious nature of the Celtic peoples. Its power over the Celts in Britain was of late growth, and due to the personality of a few individuals. Uncemented by definite organisation, poor in resources, weak alike in learning and in numbers, it could not rise to the duty of leading its captors captive, but shrunk away from contact with the ruthless barbarians and their stormy faith in the powers of nature,

State of the Church in Britain, c. 450.

back into the fastnesses of Welsh and Cornish hills, or down into the holes and caves where a slave population alone dares to meet. There is little evidence of Church life in England for a century after the coming of the English. Christianity was pushed out of the life of the people where the barbarians made good their hold, or dropped out of mind as the superstition of a conquered race. Only in that part of Britain not yet England, as yet unconquered by the Angles and the Saxons, the Church was still a power over the lives of men; but pressed by the inroads of the heathen in the east, cut off from all communication with the Church on the continent to the south, it lost for a time both vigour and initiative, and seems to have derived what energy it displayed mainly from the sister Church of Ireland.

From the year 449, for a century and a quarter, the tide of heathen invasion crept slowly over the land. Pushing their way in their long flat-bottomed boats up the rivers, seizing upon Roman fortresses like Canterbury and Aldborough, which commanded the fords and marked the course of the great roads, turning the flank of the dense masses of fen and woodland which barred their path by a dexterous use of the paved roads and tributary streams, sometimes climbing laboriously through the forests to the heights of the open uplands, slowly and painfully driving back the bulk of the Celtic inhabitants and imposing their own civilisation upon those who were left, the English won their way step by step into the heart of the country. They flocked over from Frisia and the marshes of the Elbe, and the promontory of Denmark, bringing with them their wives and their families—the migration of a people, not the march of an army. They settled in little groups of family or tribe wherever the richness of the meadow or the clearing of the wood seemed to promise plentiful subsistence or adequate protection. Just as the English settlers in America pushed the Red Indians back from hunting-ground to hunting-ground, without interfering with their customs or rooting out their religion, so the old English in the fifth and sixth centuries pushed back the bulk

The English invasion.

of the Celts and the Romanised provincials from the towns and fortresses of Roman Britain into the hills of the Celtic west of the island.

The chief English kingdoms.

Gradually, as the English settlement became more complete, the need for political organisation began to be felt. Out of the mass of families and tribes emerged bit by bit larger political associations of a rude sort, to which are usually given the name of kingdoms, and a considerable number of smaller divisions, whose territorial limits are sometimes roughly marked by those of our modern counties and dioceses. Between the Humber and the Forth was the great English kingdom of Northumbria.[1] In the centre, stretching from the fens of Lincoln to the woods which crown the valley of the Severn, was the huge mass of the marchland Mercia. South of the Thames, enclosed between the great forest of Anderida and the sea, was Kent, the earliest settlement of the Jutes. To the west of the Andredsweald, lying between Southampton and the Bristol Channel, between the Exe and the highlands of the Thames valley by Dorchester, the vast and incongruous kingdom of the West Saxons pushed with one hand the west Welsh into the forest of Dean, while with the other it cooped up the south Welsh among the hills of Cornwall.

Towards the close of the sixth century the work was complete. Celtic Christianity had been driven out of sight and almost out of mind over five-sixths of the country. The worship of the powers of nature under the personifications of Woden, of Freia, and of Thor, had succeeded to the worship of Christ, and the days of the English week are still left to prove how completely the old civilisation had passed away. It is true that among the Celts of Wales and Strathclyde lived on a staunch, if degraded, Church. It is true that across the water in Ireland were springing up schools of sound learning and zealous faith, which were soon to bear unexampled fruit. It is true that in the far north, amid the

[1] It must be remembered that up to the tenth century what is now south-east Scotland was an integral part of England, and what is now south-west Scotland and north-west England formed an independent Celtic kingdom called Strathclyde.

Picts and Scots, was already founded the great missionary college of Iona. It is probable that through the medium of the enslaved remnants of the Celtic inhabitants were handed down to their barbarian conquerors some traditions of Roman civilisation. It is possible that, hidden away in remote places, there lingered on for many years despised and isolated congregations of Christians.[1] Nevertheless, with these slight exceptions, over the fair fields of prosperous and fertile England brooded the darkness of an effete and savage creed.

Just at the end of the century the light began to break. The nearness of Kent to the mainland of Europe naturally caused the influence of Gaul, and of its conquerors the Franks, to be felt there sooner than elsewhere. Æthelbert, its powerful and enlightened king, became a suitor for the hand of Bertha, the daughter of Charibert, king of Paris. Bertha, like most of her countrywomen, was a Christian, and on her marriage with Æthelbert obtained permission to bring with her Luidhard, a Frankish bishop, as her confessor and chaplain, and to repair the ancient church of S. Martin at Canterbury for the worship of Christ. From Bertha and Luidhard doubtless Æthelbert drew his first lessons about Christianity. Their presence in Kent paved the way for subsequent missionary effort. They disposed the king to receive Christian missionaries kindly. But the initiative for the conversion of their adopted country was not taken by them. Not in Paris nor in Gaul, not among courtiers or bishops, but in distant Rome under the humble cowl of a monk, was to be found the zeal and the love necessary for the apostle of the English.

Marriage of Æthelbert and Bertha.

[1] There is some evidence to show that there was a bishop of London as late as A.D. 580, and a congregation at Glastonbury sixty years later.

CHAPTER II

THE CONVERSION OF THE ENGLISH

A.D. 597–655

In the year 585 Gregory, who had just been made abbot of the monastery which he had founded upon the Cælian hill, where still it stands, while walking through the slave-market at Rome saw some Northumbrian boys exposed there for sale. His sympathies were powerfully excited by their white skins, blue eyes, and flaxen hair, and he sought permission to leave Rome and devote himself to missionary work among the heathen English. His fellow-citizens would not let him go. He had to be patient and bide his time. A few years later the opportunity came. He was raised to the papacy, and found himself in a position to command, not to ask. Remembering his promise to the golden-haired boys that Alleluia should be sung in the land of Ælle, he chose Augustine, the prior of his monastery on the Cælian hill and his own friend and constant companion, to be the bearer of the message of truth and peace to the savage English. In the year 596 the little band set out from Rome, but when they reached Aix in Provence, struck, as Bede says, with sluggish fear, they refused to advance, and sent Augustine back to Rome to lay their difficulties before the pope. They little knew the man with whom they had to deal. Gregory would not hear of their return. Arming Augustine with greater powers over his companions by giving him the authority of an abbot, and smoothing his path through Gaul by sending letters of commendation to the rulers of the countries through which he must pass, he urged

The sending of Augustine, 596.

them to renewed efforts, and in the spring of the year 597 Augustine and his companions found themselves in safety opposite the white cliffs of Kent, on the threshold of their heroic enterprise.

There was no sign of fainting now, no regretful looking back to the quiet home on the Cælian. All were animated with the sense of a great mission. They celebrated the Easter festival together on the coasts of Gaul, then committing themselves to the protection of God they landed, towards the end of the month of April, at Ebbsfleet in the Isle of Thanet. The place where Hengest and his Jutes had first set foot in Britain, a hundred and fifty years before, on their errand of conquest and rapine, now welcomed the advancing banners of peace and civilisation. On landing, Augustine sent messengers to Æthelbert to tell him of his arrival. A few days afterwards the king and his thegns held a solemn meeting to receive the strangers, and hear what they had to say. The scene was an impressive one. According to the old Teutonic custom, Æthelbert took his seat in the open air, probably under a tree, and waited for his visitors. Soon the sound of a solemn chant was heard, and a procession of some forty men was seen advancing. At its head was carried a large silver cross, and by the side of the cross a picture of Christ Crucified, painted on wood. Behind, with ordered step, came the band of missionaries, singing litanies as they walked. At the end of the procession the noble form of Augustine himself towered over his companions, and marked him out to the eye as their leader and chief. As they came into the presence of the king the chant was hushed, and Augustine, standing with the cross and the picture beside him, set forth in simple words the reason of his coming. 'He told,' says an English writer, 'how the tender-hearted Jesus by His own throes had redeemed the sinful world, and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.'

Landing of Augustine, 597.

His meeting with Æthelbert.

The story cannot have been unknown to Æthelbert, nor can we imagine that the mission of Augustine had been undertaken without any intimation from the king that it would be acceptable

to him. He was a statesman and a man of culture as well as a warrior, and doubtless had felt from his intercourse with Christian Gaul, and had been taught by his Christian wife, the superiority of the religion of Christ to the worship of Woden and Thor. But he did not act hastily. With wise and courteous words he promised protection to the missionaries on behalf of himself and his thegns, and gave them full permission to make converts by persuasion. He allotted them a house to live in near the stable-gate at Canterbury, while the church of S. Martin served them for their public offices. But he refused definitely to change his religion without much greater thought and knowledge. More than this Augustine had no right to expect. For some weeks, perhaps months, he and his companions found their chief work to lie in setting forth to the heathen people around them the appeal of the Christian life. They recited their offices, celebrated mass, and preached at S. Martin's; while in their private life at their house in the stable-gate, as Bede says, 'they lived altogether in accordance with what they taught, with hearts prepared to suffer every adversity, or even to die for that truth which they preached. What need to say more? Some believed and were baptized, admiring the simplicity of their blameless life and the sweetness of their heavenly teaching.' At last, in the course of the summer their reward came. Æthelbert was convinced and offered himself for baptism. Although no coercion was used, the example of the king told upon his courtiers and his subjects. Converts increased so quickly that it was necessary that the growing Church should have the rule of a bishop. Augustine accordingly applied to the Church of Gaul for episcopal orders, and on the 16th of November he was consecrated archbishop of the English by Vergilius, archbishop and metropolitan of Arles, and the infant Church of England began to be.

Baptism of Æthelbert.

Consecration of Augustine.

Ubi Episcopus, ibi Ecclesia. By the consecration of Augustine, Christianity in Kent had ceased to be merely a mission sent by Gregory, the bishop of Rome. It had become

an integral and independent branch of the Catholic Church. First among the duties of its bishop was to find a cathedral in which to place his episcopal throne, or, as our forefathers used more simply to call it, 'to set his bishop's stool.' Close by the palace of Æthelbert, which he made over to Augustine as a dwelling-house, was a church formerly built by the Romans, but fallen into ruins. This Augustine rebuilt and enlarged, on the model of the church of S. Peter on the Vatican hill at Rome, and there he set his 'bishop's stool,' and dedicated the building 'to the name of the Holy Saviour, Jesus Christ, our God and Lord.' Thus arose the cathedral church of Christ at Canterbury, then as now, after the changes of fourteen hundred years, the mother church of English Christianity. Next to his care for his diocese came, in the mind of Augustine, thought for his community—the little band of monks over whom he presided as abbot. They in their turn required a home where they might live together under religious rule, unhampered by the affairs of the world, and a piece of hallowed ground where their bones might rest after death. So outside the walls of the city were soon seen to rise the humble beginnings of what, in the course of years, was to grow into the rich and turbulent monastery of S. Augustine.

Building of Christ Church and S. Augustine's.

While the archbishop was busy with these matters, converts were flocking apace into the Church. Thegn and ceorl quickly followed where king and queen had pointed the way. It became urgently necessary to increase the mission staff. Gregory, on hearing of the success of Augustine's efforts, sent to his assistance four more priests, among whom were Mellitus, Justus, and Paulinus, who reached Kent in 601. At the same time the pope made to the archbishop a present of a pall. This was originally a cloak, usually of rich material, which the emperors were accustomed to grant to high officers of Church and State as a mark of honour. After the destruction of the western empire, it became customary for the popes to make the grant in western Europe

Landing of Mellitus, Justus, and Paulinus, 601.

instead of the emperors, and the pall gradually became looked upon more and more as a distinctly ecclesiastical vestment. It was reduced in size to a narrow strip of white woollen material, which encircled the neck loosely and hung down in front, and its use was restricted to metropolitans. By the seventh and eighth centuries a symbolical meaning became attached to it, and a doctrine in the interests of the papacy grew up round it. It was maintained by the papal lawyers that its grant to a metropolitan by the pope signified a license to him to use his metropolitical powers, and that therefore, although an archbishop became archbishop and metropolitan in right of his see, he had no business to perform any archiepiscopal act until he had received permission from the pope to do so by the grant of a pall. This doctrine slowly made its way in Europe, and did much to confuse the minds of Englishmen when it became of practical importance to them at the time of the Norman Conquest.

The sending of the pall.

With the pall Gregory sent letters of advice to Augustine, containing his views on the future organisation of the Church of England. He directed him to open communications with the bishops of the Celtic Church in the west and north of the country, and affected, though he had no possible right to do so, to place them under his authority as archbishop and metropolitan. Looking upon England as still the Britain of Roman times, he fixed upon London and York, the two chief Roman cities, as the two centres of ecclesiastical administration. At each city was to be established the seat of an archbishop, who was to bear rule over twelve suffragans. England and Scotland, from Pentland Firth to the Humber, was to acknowledge the sway of the archbishop of York, while the archbishop of London ruled over all England and Wales, from the Humber to the Channel. The senior of the two was to have precedence over the other.

Gregory's plan of Church organisation.

Circumstances have prevented this plan from ever being carried out. The stubborn paganism of London compelled the seat of the southern archbishop to remain at Canterbury, until traditions

had grown up round the Kentish city which it was impossible to break and unwise to ignore. The archbishopric of York was indeed founded within a few years, but the conversion and organisation of the north which was expected to result from it never took place. It is only in quite recent times that the province of York has become in any sense equal in importance to the province of Canterbury as a unit of organisation, and it may well be doubted whether even now its existence, the only direct and permanent result of the scheme of Gregory, is not a weakness rather than a strength to the Church of England.

However, it was not to be expected that either Gregory or Augustine could see so far into the future as to divine those political events which were in the course of time to make Scotland into a separate kingdom, and reduce the frontiers of England from the Forth to the Tweed. As things then stood, the scheme of Gregory was sensible and statesmanlike enough. The first step towards carrying it out was to unite in one organisation the scattered groups of Christians who lived within the borders of ancient Britain. But unfortunately, neither Gregory nor Augustine seemed in the least to understand the difficulties which the policy involved. Coming directly from Rome, and conscious of the superior culture of Roman Christianity, rich with six hundred years of imperial and apostolic tradition, Augustine looked upon the remnants of the Celtic Church among the hills of Cornwall, Wales, and Strathclyde, and the Irish missions among the islands of western Scotland, much as the educated Englishman is now apt to look upon the Christian communities of the stagnant east. He found them in many respects behind the times. They lacked the orderly organisation familiar to those who had been trained under the influence of Roman law and method. They still clung to observances which the Roman Church had grown out of a hundred years ago. They celebrated the festival of Easter according to the calculations of a calendar which had long ago been proved to be erroneous, and had been superseded over most of Europe by a more accurate one. They still cut the tonsure of

Condition of the Celtic Church.

Its peculiar observances.

the clergy after a fashion which had been obsolete in western Christendom for a century. They neglected to use certain parts of the rite of Holy Baptism upon which Roman theologians in recent years had come to lay great stress.

Such things as these appeared to the somewhat narrow mind of Augustine as relics of barbarism and ignorance, which must at once be swept away before the enlightenment of Rome and the authority of the pope. He did not realise that he was dealing with a persecuted branch of a great Church of the north-west which might well claim to meet even the Church of the west on terms of equality. For more than a hundred years it might well be said that Catholic Christendom had been divided into three great sections—the Church of the east, with its centre at Constantinople, the Church of the west, with its centre at Rome, and the Church of the north-west, with its centre in Ireland. With much of barbarism, with much of undisciplined heroism, this Church of the north-west had developed wholly apart from the influence of Rome, and unaffected for good or evil by its culture or its law.

Its vigour in Ireland.

In Ireland its organisation was tribal and monastic. Its strength lay in its love of learning, and in its singular power over the human will in consecrating its children absolutely to the service of God. In the sixth and seventh centuries Ireland was the island of saints and the mother of missionaries. From Ireland came S. Columba in 563, to begin, as it has been well called, the noblest missionary career ever accomplished in Britain, in the island of Iona off the west coast of Scotland. From Ireland went S. Columban and S. Gall to carry the message of the gospel to the remote valleys of Burgundy and Switzerland. While Rome was engaged in the intellectual struggles of theological controversy, Ireland was sending missionaries to convert the heathen at the very gates of Italy. In Wales the Celtic Church was throwing off the weakness and recovering from the degradation caused by the long struggle with the English conquerors. Organised like the Church in the east and west under territorial bishops, it too had developed, under S.

Its recovery in Wales.

David, Dubritius, and Teilo, a real and true life of its own, wholly uninfluenced by Rome. It had great schools of learning at Bangor Iscoed and elsewhere. As in Cornwall, it produced a vast number of local saints, built churches, and hallowed sites in a way which shows it to have had a strong hold over its people. A Church like this, conscious of its own vigour, would naturally resent a claim of foreign authority which treated it as barbarous, and cling to its own customs as part and parcel of its history and methods, however imperfect they might be.

This is exactly what happened. Augustine, anxious to carry out Gregory's instructions, put himself in communication with the bishops of south Wales as the nearest body of Celtic bishops, and asked for an interview, which was at once granted. It took place in the year 603, in West Saxon country, probably not far from Gloucester, but the exact place is not as yet identified. As usual, the conference was in the open air under an oak. The questions raised were chiefly those of the observance of Easter and the differences in the rite of Holy Baptism, in both of which matters Augustine seems to have demanded the acceptance of the Roman customs. After some discussion the conference was adjourned, apparently with the object of obtaining the assistance of trained theologians, for, at the second meeting, besides the seven bishops, who would probably include nearly all the bishops both of north and south Wales, there appeared learned men from the monasteries, especially the abbot and many of the monks of Bangor Iscoed. Whether these last, as is not improbable, brought a more controversial spirit into the discussion, or whether the determination of Augustine to exact submission to Roman authority became more marked as the conference proceeded, it is difficult to say; but it soon became clear that no agreement was possible. The Celts would not surrender their ancient customs at the bidding of the Roman missionary, much less acknowledge him as their metropolitan. Augustine, on his side, would be satisfied with no less.

Interview of Augustine with the Welsh bishops, 603.

The conference broke up amid hot recriminations. Both sides had conducted their case with narrowness of mind and impetuosity of temper, and both were to suffer in consequence. The Celtic Church in Wales and Cornwall, cut off from the larger civilisation of Rome, and deprived of the support of the Christian English, soon fell a victim to the rapacity and cruelty of the heathen on its borders. Ravaged and terrorised by Æthelfrith of Northumbria, it sank into inglorious isolation, while Augustine and his companions, shut into Kent by the Thames and the Andredsweald, were unable to extend their influence over other parts of the country. Through the fact that Sabert, king of the East Saxons, was Æthelbert's nephew, Augustine was enabled to consecrate Mellitus to be bishop of London in 604, where he built a church in honour of S. Paul and set up his bishop's stool therein. But this was the only step which he took outside the borders of Kent. At Rochester he established a see in dependence upon that of Canterbury, and consecrated Justus to be its first bishop. More than this he was unable to do. In 604 he died, leaving, as the practical results of his life, the establishment of the Church in Kent and the planting of a mission outpost among the East Saxons in London.

Foundation of the sees of London and Rochester, 604.

Yet this was no inconsiderable work for seven short years. He had succeeded in laying a foundation strong enough to withstand the wild storm of the pagan reaction which was inevitable after Æthelbert's death, wide enough to bear in after times the chief weight of the fully organised Church. Nothing that Augustine did had to be undone. The business of his successors in happier times was merely to add to his work, until the mother church of Canterbury, which he had founded, became the heart of English religion and the central authority of the national Church. Augustine was in no sense one of the world's heroes. He did not overtop his contemporaries in moral grandeur as he did in physical stature. He was not a Gregory in wide statesmanship, a Columba in missionary stedfastness, a Xavier

Estimate of the work of Augustine.

in burning enthusiasm for souls, or a Patteson or a Smythies in single-minded consecration of life. His monastic training favoured concentration at the expense of sympathy, and exaggerated the value of a uniform system. His long residence at Rome made him impatient of disordered methods and chaotic organisation. Unable to put himself in the place of others, to see with their eyes and to think with their thoughts, he could never, like S. Paul, be all things to all men in order that he might save some. To him was given, as to the bulk of mankind, only power to set before men the standard of a simple and consistent life of Christian discipline, illuminated by faith and sanctified by devotion—a life attractive and powerful over human nature, not by the richness of exceptional gifts, but through the force of steady and noble purpose.

After his death, evil times came upon the Church. Mellitus was banished in 616 by the sons of Sabert, for refusing to admit them to Communion before they were baptized, and the mission outpost in London had to be withdrawn. For a moment it seemed as if Kent would have to be abandoned too on the death of Æthelbert in the same year, for Eadbald, his son, either from a wild outbreak of passion, or more probably from a doubt as to the real hold of the Church on his people, relapsed for a time into heathenism. But after a few months of sharp struggle, conviction and policy triumphed, and the penitent Eadbald became as staunch a supporter of the Church as his father Æthelbert had been. In 625 occurred an opportunity of putting his principles to the test. Eadwine, the powerful king of Northumbria, asked for the hand of Æthelburga, the daughter of Eadbald, in marriage, but Eadbald refused the offer unless she was permitted the free exercise of her religion and the ministrations of a chaplain. To this Eadwine willingly agreed, even adding that he would himself adopt her religion if the wise men of his kingdom pronounced it to be superior to his own. Accordingly, on the 21st of July, 625, Paulinus was consecrated as missionary bishop for

Danger of the Church in London and Kent, 616.

Mission of Paulinus to Northumbria, 625.

Northumbria, and, attended by a deacon named James, accompanied the young princess to her northern home.

Eadwine, however, like Æthelbert, had no mind to change his religion hurriedly, though he permitted his infant daughter to be baptized without objection. More than a year passed and yet the king, though much impressed with the teaching of Paulinus, would not declare himself. Like many other people he wanted the courage of a great venture. At last he determined to consult the Witan of his kingdom. Early in the year 627 they met at Godmundingham, near York. Directly the discussion began, it was clear that the worship of Woden and Thor inspired very little conviction in the minds of the Northumbrian thegns. Coifi, the chief priest of Woden, cynically avowed that, as the gods he had worshipped all his life had done so little for him, he was quite willing to try another religion. But the earnestness of the Teutonic mind required some better argument than that of self-interest, and one of the attendant thegns gave a far truer interpretation of the deeper feelings of the audience by the parable he put forward expressive of the eternal mystery of the here and the hereafter. 'O king, often when men are sitting at meat in your hall in winter tide, and the warm fire is lighted on the hearth, but the cold rain storm is without, a sparrow flieth in at one door and warms himself for a brief moment in the light and heat of the hearth fire, and then goeth out by another door into the winter's darkness. So is it with the life of man in this world; what has gone before it, what will come after it, no one can tell. If the strange teacher can say, let him be heard.' This longing of the human mind for the explanation of life in this world and the assurance of the life to come it is the mission of Christianity to satisfy and to hallow, and as Paulinus, like S Paul of old, proceeded to reason of righteousness and temperance and judgment to come, conviction of the truth of his words came home to his hearers. 'Now,' cried Coifi, 'I understand what the truth is. I see it shining clearly in this teaching.' Leaping on his horse, with the consent of the king he rode straight to the temple, and

The gemot of Godmundingham, 627.

hurling his spear against the venerated shrine, gave orders that it should be burned to ashes. Eadwine built a little church at York, on ground where the minster now stands, and was baptized there on Easter eve, 627, with many of his nobles and people.

Baptism of Eadwine.

For six years all went well. Sadly deficient in priests to assist him, Paulinus could not hope to plant the Church permanently in local centres as had been done so largely in Kent. He had to content himself with purely missionary tours. Accompanied by his faithful deacon, James, he travelled on foot over the hills and forests of the wild and uninhabited country which reached from Edinburgh on the hill above the Firth of Forth to the Humber, visiting the scattered hamlets in the clearings of the woods and on the banks of the mountain streams, preaching to the simple peasantry the gospel of Jesus, and baptizing them, if tradition speaks true, by the hundred in the numerous fountains and rivers which drain the Northumbrian moorlands. His gaunt and stooping figure, with his piercing eyes and long raven hair, commanded respect wherever he went, and compelled attention. It is said that he penetrated even over the western border to Whalley, in Strathclyde. It is certain that, in 628, he was as far south as the old Roman city of Lincoln, in Lindsey, for in that year, at the church of S. Paul, he there consecrated Honorius to be the fifth archbishop of Canterbury.

Evangelisation of Northumbria.

Three years later, while Paulinus was thus devoting his splendid energies to the spread of the Church in the north, another English kingdom was added to the ranks of the faithful. A monk of Burgundy, whose Latin name was Felix, offered himself to Honorius for mission work among the English, and the archbishop sent him to East Anglia, where Sigebert, the king of the East Angles, had lately become a Christian while suffering temporary exile among the Franks. There, at Dunwich, on the coast of Suffolk, Felix set his bishop's stool in 631, and founded a school in connection with his cathedral, and a monastery at Burgh castle, from which

Conversion of East Anglia, 631.

soon poured forth bands of Christian teachers—priests, monks, and laymen, who quickly established the Church among the numerous villages of the rich East Anglian plain.

In three years it was the turn of the west to follow that of the east. A priest living in Italy named Birinus, went to pope Honorius and asked him to be sent on a mission to those of the English who were still heathen. He was consecrated bishop by the archbishop of Milan, and landed on the coast of Hampshire among the West Saxons in 634. After long and arduous missionary journeys among the difficult uplands and marshy river valleys which lie between the sea and the Thames, he eventually made his way as far east as Oxfordshire. There, in the old Roman settlement of Dorchester he established his cathedral, and in 635 received Kynegils the king of the West Saxons, and Cwichelm his son, into the Church by baptism.

Planting of the Church in Wessex, 635.

In the history of the planting and establishment of the Church among savage peoples, as in that of the foundation of political states, there are often three distinct stages of growth to be observed. First comes the purely missionary stage, when the intrepid preachers of the new religion make their way from hamlet to hamlet amid the storm and the frost, delivering their message wherever a knot of hearers can be found to stay for a while under the shadow of the freshly planted cross at the entrance of the village or at the meeting of the roads. Such is the work done by hundreds of missionaries in our own days in savage countries. Such was the work done among our forefathers by Paulinus and his friend James the deacon among the forests of Northumbria, and by Birinus amid the open uplands and deep river valleys of Wessex. Next comes a stage of partial settlement, when round the episcopal seat, often the royal town, grows up a central cathedral church and school, supplied with a growing band of clergy and teachers, who, under the direction of the bishop, by preaching tour and ministerial circuit, either extend the kingdom of God by the conversion of the heathen, or strengthen it by confirming and

Stages of growth in the infant Church.

instructing the baptized in the principles of the faith which they have adopted. Of this stage the Church in East Anglia under Felix, bishop of Dunwich, was a plain instance in the times of which we are speaking, and the Church in Northumbria and Mercia, and among the East Saxons under S. Aidan, Cedd, and S. Chad, a still more notable example a few years later. Lastly comes the time when the Church finally emerges from the missionary stage and becomes an organised and settled institution, ministering to the souls of its people regularly and systematically from local centres. Directed and governed from the central seat by episcopal and archiepiscopal authority through settled forms of law, it trains in its schools year by year a body of men who, according to their capacities, find their appropriate sphere of work as clergy or teachers in due order of rank and gift. It offers to its children in the monasteries the secluded life of discipline and devotion, opportunity for spiritual refreshment, and leisure for intellectual work. Such was the condition of the Church in Kent alone of all the English kingdoms when, forty years after the coming of S. Augustine, a storm-cloud suddenly burst upon the Church of England before her organisation was sufficiently perfected to withstand the shock, and in a short time completely changed the face of English Christianity.

In the year 626 Mercia, the vast uncivilised middle land still heathen, which extended from the borders of Wales almost to the Wash, fell under the sceptre of Penda the Strenuous, a warrior king of the old heathen stamp, who determined to raise Mercia to the headship of England by making it the champion of heathenism. In 628 he attacked Wessex and forced Kynegils to surrender to him the valley of the Severn. He then made an alliance with Cadwallon, the Celtic and Christian king of north Wales. Their united armies poured into Northumbria, defeated and killed Eadwine at Heathfield in 633, and ravaged the country for more than a year. Paulinus quailed before the blow. Taking the widowed queen Æthelburga with him he retired to his old home in Kent, where he ended his days as bishop of Rochester,

Victories of Penda.

Flight of Paulinus, 633.

leaving his disorganised converts to get on as best they might under the care of the intrepid deacon James. But hardly was Paulinus safe in Kent than relief came to the Northumbrians. Oswald, the nephew of Eadwine, who had been educated at S. Columba's monastery at Iona, prepared to try conclusions with the Celtic barbarian. At the Heaven-field near Hexham, in 635, Cadwallon paid for his iniquities with his blood, and the Northumbrian Church was once more free. But the desertion of Paulinus had made it headless, its disorganised condition rendered it helpless. The work of reconstruction had to be begun at once under a new bishop. Oswald's thoughts naturally turned to the leaders of the Irish mission in Scotland, who had given him protection in his need, and instructed him in the faith, and he applied to the monastery of Iona for a bishop. In answer to his appeal a monk was sent, but, easily disgusted with the rude ways and half-heathen customs of the Northumbrians, he returned again without even having seen Oswald, and announced to the assembled brethren the failure of his mission and the hopelessness of the undertaking. 'Was it their stubbornness or your severity?' cried the voice of a monk named Aidan; 'did you forget the apostle's command to feed them first with milk and then with meat?' Hardly were the words spoken, than by acclamation Aidan was hailed as bishop of the Northumbrians, and submitting to the will of his brethren he was duly consecrated, and made his way to Oswald at his fortress city of Bamborough.

Consecration of S. Aidan, 635.

With the coming of S. Aidan in 635 came a fresh spirit and a new ideal into the English Church. To one trained in the traditions of Roman culture like S. Augustine or Paulinus, Christianity presented itself essentially as the *civitas Dei*, the kingdom of God set up in the world. It enlisted in its cause the sentiments of loyalty and patriotism. It appealed to the Roman sense of order and capacity for government. Its law and organisation were proofs of its title to rule. It was as a citizen of the world-wide State that a Roman was enabled to attain to the highest

Contrast between Roman and Irish Christianity.

duties and privileges of political life. So, as a member of the world-wide Church, he fulfilled the highest capacities of his spiritual nature. He could not conceive of a Church without territorial organisation, without orderly government, without a carefully regulated hierarchy with due gradation of power. Such an institution would seem to him pure chaos. Wherever he went he brought with him fixed rules of action, law, order, and uniform system. But as sometimes happens, the system and the law which he brought formed channels which confined as well as directed the flow of energy, and checked instead of regulating the outburst of that enthusiastic zeal which, regardless of consequences and contemptuous of rule and precedent, conquers the world with splendid audacity. To lose all in order to win all, is not merely a paradox of S. Paul. It is the condition of victory of all great causes. This power the Scoto-Irish Church brought into England with S. Aidan. But by itself it was incomplete. It could arouse, but it could not maintain; it could win, but it could not govern. The combination of Celtic self-sacrifice and zeal with the discipline and the culture of Rome was needed before the English Church could fully awake to the responsibilities of her high mission.

Want of organisation in the Irish Church.

The Irish settlement on the west of Scotland, planted in the island of Iona by S. Columba in 563, adopted the mode of government usual in the Irish Church at that time. There was no territorial episcopate whatever. Jurisdiction, or the power of government, lay in the monastery, which was the unit of church organisation, and was administered by the abbot or coarb, who represented in the ecclesiastical sphere the chief of the tribe, with whom lay the chief authority in Irish political life. Christianity was spread by the establishment of branch houses and preaching stations dependent on the central monastery, and reproducing as far as possible the common life of the monastery. The tie between the superior and the inferior clergy was wholly personal, like the tie between a thegn and a king. The Irish monks knew nothing whatever of territorial limits or local rights. They looked

upon the episcopate merely as an ecclesiastical order, necessary for the due discharge of certain spiritual functions—such as ordination, confirmation, and consecration. It was the custom for each monastery to keep a certain number of its monks in episcopal orders for those purposes, just as in the east at the present day there are many monasteries consisting almost wholly of laymen, which keep a certain number of priests as chaplains to celebrate mass and conduct the services.

The Church was thus tribal and monastic in character. It was deficient in its sense of unity and catholicity. The type of Christianity which it produced was ascetic, saintly, and personal. It found its natural home far from the turmoil of men in the island sanctuary and the forest hermitage, its best method of work in the personal contact of soul with soul, its truest source of influence in the example of the Christ-like life lived once more among men. Without the assistance of Rome there could never have been built up in England a great organised and cultured Church, able to hold its own among the storms of Christendom. Without the help of the saints of Iona, that Church would have been but a mechanism of bones and flesh wanting the life-giving soul.

Character of S. Aidan.

Of all the noble band of saints with which the Irish Church has enriched the world, there is no one save S. Columba himself so lovable by nature, and so lofty in character, as S. Aidan. In him we see the perfect type of ascetic Christianity. Called from his convent to rule the vast diocese of Northumbria, he never thought himself thereby freed from the obligations of monastic discipline. Like S. Francis of Assisi, six centuries later, he embraced holy poverty as his bride. Like him, he made his missionary journeys on foot, with his companions, throughout the length and breadth of Northumbria, strenuously refusing the assistance of a horse, beguiling the tediousness of the way with hymns and spiritual conversation. Like him, he chose a place of retirement far from the haunts of men for meditation and prayer, and the island of Lindisfarne, with its little church and school, and its collection of rough huts,

soon grew equal in the veneration and affection of the northern English to the mother foundation of Iona itself. Humility and self-sacrifice formed the essential groundwork of his character; gentleness, simplicity, and purity combined to free it from all danger of exaggeration, and over all the beams of a Divine Love shed their hallowing light. S. Aidan lived in the eye of God. No thought of self or personal ambition ever derogated from His absolute supremacy. In this lies the secret of his power.

Relations of S. Aidan and S. Oswald.

He was fortunate enough to find in the king, Oswald, a man like-minded with himself. Never were two men better fitted to work together for the highest interests of mankind. Both were trained in the same school of ascetic Christianity. Both placed before themselves the same ideal of the service of man in and through a life consecrated to God. Both sought in prayer and devotion the strength necessary to play their part in the world. And neither shrunk, as some saints have shrunk, from the strenuous work which their position in the world demanded. If we find S. Oswald dividing his Easter meal, and the silver dish on which it was served, among the hungry poor who crowded round the gates of his palace, or rejoicing to interpret the sermons of S. Aidan to his thegns and dependants; we find him also careful of the dignity of his crown, extending the pre-eminence of Northumbria over all northern England, entering into treaties of alliance with Wessex, and at last losing his life on the fatal field of Maserfeld, near Oswestry, in 642, rather than surrender the newly-conquered district of Lindsey to Penda, his Mercian rival. If we find S. Aidan choosing rather the island of Lindisfarne than the royal city of Bamborough as his home, and preferring to live in poverty and simplicity the life of a humble monk rather than take his place in the court even of a saintly king; we find him also ever immersed in the work of his see, training under his own eye a school of twelve picked boys at Lindisfarne, travelling on foot over his vast and difficult diocese, preaching, confirming, and instructing wherever opportunity offered, gathering round him bands of devoted

helpers, impressing all who met him and all who heard of him with the conviction of his spiritual power, and drawing them to him by the magic of his personal grace, until the Holy Island of Lindisfarne, as men loved to call it, became a second Iona, and Aidan another Columba.

But Aidan was not permitted to see much direct fruit of his labours. To him fell the task of laying foundations upon which others might build. It was his work to plant in many souls a zeal for righteousness, to keep alive at the court and in the realm of Oswald and his successor, Oswin, the spirit of religion. As long as Penda lived, and Northumbria and Mercia were locked in a death struggle, Aidan could only prepare for a happier day. He was not destined to see its dawn. During his life the flames of war shot far and wide over East Anglia, Lindsey, and Northumbria. In 643 Penda even penetrated to the fortress of Bamborough itself, and only failed to burn it to the ground, it was said, owing to a sudden change of wind brought about by the prayers of the saint at Lindisfarne. In 651 a tragedy deprived Aidan of his royal friend and disciple, Oswin, and united all Northumbria under the rule of his relative and murderer, Oswiu. Aidan's tender heart was broken by the news. Only twelve days afterwards, he was visiting the church at Bamborough when he was suddenly seized with a mortal attack. Stretched out on the ground, covered by a sheet, with his head supported by the buttress of the church, he breathed his last in true soldier fashion almost before his attendants realised his danger. Four years afterwards, in 655, the battle of Winwaed gave peace to the distracted north. Penda was utterly routed by Oswiu, and did not survive his defeat. His death marks the end of the long struggle between Northumbria and Mercia, between the Church and heathenism. From that time no champion of heathenism appeared in England until the coming of the northmen. The Church was everywhere victorious. At once she began to occupy the vacant country. Religious houses were founded at Whitby, Chester, Peterborough, and Boston;

Death of S. Aidan, 651.

Battle of Winwaed, 655. Victory of Christianity.

bishoprics established among the East Saxons and the South Mercians. Although there were still plenty of heathens in England, there was now no power in England avowedly heathen, while missionaries pouring down from Northumbria rapidly spread the news of the gospel among the dark and secluded places of the land.

CHAPTER III

THE ORGANISATION OF THE EARLY ENGLISH CHURCH

A.D. 655-735

DURING the ten years which followed the battle of Winwaed, the Church of England passed out of the purely missionary stage. The South Saxons shut in between the Andredsweald and the sea were the only English tribe which still remained heathen. Even the stubborn East Saxons had been unable to resist the gentle pleadings of Cedd their bishop, and had once more returned in penitence to the faith which they had abjured. The Mercians under Peada, the son and successor of Penda, were doing their best to atone for the lateness of their conversion by the zeal with which they welcomed the new-found truth. Unless some strange catastrophe should occur, the Church of Christ was now for good or for ill safely established in England on the ruins of the worship of Woden and Thor. England was a Christian country and likely to remain so. But the Christianity which she professed differed in different parts of the country in origin, in observance, in tradition, and in spirit. In Kent and Wessex it was Roman and papal, and had at its back the traditions of western Christendom, the culture and prestige of Rome, the authority—vague, undefined, but constantly growing—of the see of Peter.[1] In

Condition of the Church of England, 655.

[1] In the first two centuries of the Christian era the foundation of the Church of Rome was always ascribed to the two apostles, SS. Peter and Paul. During the third century the belief seems to have grown up that its foundation was due to S. Peter alone, and that he was the first bishop of the see. By the middle of the fourth century that belief was firmly established, and by the middle of the seventh century would not have been disputed.

Northumbria, Mercia, and among the East Saxons — districts comprising by far the larger part of England—Christianity was Irish in its character, ascetic, personal, monastic, holding fast to the Celtic customs, but differing from Irish precedents in the adoption of an episcopate territorial in principle though very loosely organised. In East Anglia there was a mixture of origin and probably of practice, since the mission of Felix from Canterbury had been supplemented by that of Fursey, a monk from Ireland. Outside the limits of the English kingdoms, in Cornwall, Wales, and Strathclyde, Celtic Christianity bore unquestioned sway. Over five-sixths of Christian Britain the authority of Rome was not acknowledged. The effective power of the archbishop of Canterbury, in spite of his claim to be archbishop of the English, extended over but two, or at the most three bishoprics, while the archbishopric of York had ended with the flight of Paulinus almost before it had begun to be.

Necessity of unity and organisation.

It was clear that if the English Church was to be a great national force, it must be united and organised. If it was to be united and organised, if order and government were to rule in the place of isolated effort and personal influence, if bishops were to be governors and administrators as well as leaders, it could only be by obeying knowledge rather than ignorance, by preferring catholic tradition to local custom—in a word, by subordinating Celtic to Roman Christianity. Nor was this truth unperceived by the more thoughtful of the English themselves. The isolation of the Celtic Church forced itself upon men's notice just in proportion as communication with Europe became more frequent. Irishmen and Scots, as well as English who had journeyed across the water in search of learning or in pursuit of curiosity, came back earnest advocates for absorption into the western Church. Of these the most notable were Benedict Biscop, a Northumbrian thegn, afterwards the founder of the monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow, and Wilfrid, a young monk of Lindisfarne, who, after learning at the feet of Aidan

all that Iona could teach him, carried his 'athletic body, unclouded cheerfulness, and blessed mind' to Rome and to Lyons. There he acquired wider and deeper knowledge which enabled him to come back to his native land, stimulated by the blessing of the pope, to rule over his monastery of Ripon, and devote his splendid energies to the establishment of papal authority over his native Church. Even in Northumbria itself practical difficulties were continually occurring. Oswiu remained true to the Celtic traditions in which he had been brought up, and maintained the cause of Colman, the bishop of Lindisfarne, who, like his predecessors Finan and Aidan, had come from Iona. His wife Eanfled and his son Alchfrid were zealous for the Roman rule, and were supported, not only by the venerable deacon James and the young enthusiast Wilfrid, but even by a monk from Ireland itself, named Tuda, who reported the acceptance of Roman authority by the Celts of south Ireland. So keen was the growth of party spirit that Agilbert, formerly bishop of Dorchester, did not scruple to ordain Wilfrid priest at Ripon without ever consulting Colman at all. Confusion such as this was plainly intolerable, and Oswiu, with the insight of a statesman, saw that the time had come for Northumbria to follow along the path of progress, and no longer to attempt to maintain an impossible isolation from the rest of the west.

The conference at Whitby, 664.

In order to smooth difficulties and make the acceptance of the Roman rule a national act, Oswiu summoned a special conference to meet at the new monastery of S. Hilda on the cliffs of Whitby, to consider the question. It met in Lent 664. Oswiu set forth the difficulty in a few words, narrowing the question at issue to that of Easter. There were two traditions about keeping Easter, which was the true one? Colman, the bishop of Lindisfarne, rose and stated the argument for the Celtic observance. It was merely that their tradition was derived from S. John, and handed on to them by S. Columba, and he dared not change it. Wilfrid got up to reply. With convincing logic he showed that the Celtic Easter was not

that derived from S. John, but differed from it in many important particulars and really arose from sheer misunderstanding of the points at issue. Then, throwing aside argument, he burst into fiery invective. With lofty scorn he denounced the few obstinate inhabitants of parts of two remote isles who were setting themselves up against the whole civilised world, and daring to pit the authority of Columba, saint though he might be, against that of the blessed chief of the apostles, whom Christ had Himself constituted head over His Church. Oswiu cleverly took up Wilfrid's point. 'Did Christ really say,' he asked of Colman, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church'? Colman assented. 'And did He ever say anything of the sort to Columba?' The bishop had to acknowledge that He did not. 'And He gave to Peter the keys of heaven?' 'Yes.' Then said Oswiu, with a laugh: 'For my part I shall obey the rulings of that doorkeeper of yours, lest perhaps when I come to the doors of the kingdom I shall find no one to unbar the gate for me.'

The decision of Oswiu is that of a man who, having made up his mind beforehand, prefers to announce his change of front by means of a homely jest, instead of giving his reasons in full; but the arguments of Wilfrid and Colman are very characteristic of the real questions at issue. Colman, if he had known his case, could have demolished Wilfrid's appeal to the decisive authority of S. Peter as easily as Wilfrid demolished his appeal to the decisive authority of S. John. Both were equally unhistorical. But behind the arguments used lay the real questions which were involved —isolation or unity, law or chaos, culture or ignorance, progress or backwardness. The power of Rome was on the side of civilisation. Wilfrid's audacious appeal to the conclusive authority of S. Peter in Rome may have been unhistorical, but it expressed at that time a great and profound truth—*i.e.* that Roman tradition and papal authority were the forces which, in the coming ages, were to conquer the barbarian world, and consecrate it to the service of Christ. The decision of Whitby

Its importance.

meant that the Church of England had determined to take her part in that noble work.

The conference at Whitby was quickly followed by the acceptance of the Roman Easter all over the kingdom. Colman, unable to change his point of view, left his see with his friends and retired to Iona. Cedd, the bishop of the East Saxons, Chad his brother, the abbot of Lastingham, and the bulk of the pupils of S. Aidan were convinced by the arguments of Wilfrid. On the retirement of Colman, Tuda succeeded to the see of Lindisfarne, but succumbed in the next year to an attack of the plague, which numbered Cedd also among its victims. Then came the opportunity of Wilfrid. Nominated bishop of Northumbria, he determined to restore the seat of the bishop from Lindisfarne to York as the site originally chosen by Gregory. With characteristic scorn of the backward Englishmen, he could find in England no bishops sufficiently papal to be in his eyes of unimpeachable orthodoxy, and he insisted on going to Gaul for his consecration. He was received with the utmost honour by Clothair, king of the Franks, and in consequence delayed his return to his diocese for nearly a year. But in the meantime the Northumbrians, tired of being so long without a bishop, prevailed upon Oswiu to replace Wilfrid by Chad. Even Chad's humility could not escape from the importunity of both king and people, and early in 666 he was consecrated to be bishop of York by Wini the Gaul, bishop of the West Saxons, and two Celtic bishops probably from Cornwall or south Wales. Thus the Roman, Gallic, and Celtic lines of succession centred on the pupil of Aidan and the future apostle of the midlands. Later in the year Wilfrid reappeared at York, but found his see most worthily filled through his own unworthy neglect. With unusual self-control, possibly prompted by compunction, he accepted the inevitable and quietly retired to his monastery at Ripon.

Triumph of Wilfrid.

Consecration of Chad to York, 666.

Unity of observance was the boon conferred upon the Church of England by Oswiu and the conference at Whitby, but mere

unity of observance was of little avail unless accompanied by unity of administration. It was not enough that men should act alike in the service of God, they must also act together. Common action, and recognised modes of action, were both necessary if the Church of England was to make her children recognise their privileges as members through her of the great world-wide spiritual society—the kingdom of God planted on earth—and lead them, through their recognition of their spiritual citizenship in the one Catholic Church, to long for a political citizenship in one national State. This was the special work of Theodore, a native of Tarsus in Cilicia, who was chosen to be archbishop of Canterbury by pope Vitalian in 668, at the request of the kings of Kent and Northumbria. Theodore was a man of orderly mind, strong will, and untiring energy. He set before himself two great objects – to establish the authority of the archbishop of Canterbury over all the bishops of England, and to organise a legislative body for the English Church. The Church in England was no longer to remain a vague instrument for making people Christian, it was to be an organised society with a definite voice and a definite government.

Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, 668.

Soon after the arrival of Theodore, in 669, he began to visit the different bishoprics of his province and set things in order. He held, in fact, what in later legal language would be called a 'metropolitical visitation.' Beginning at Rochester he consecrated Putta, a renowned Church musician, to the vacant see; then proceeding to East Anglia, he filled the see of Dunwich, which had just become empty by the death of Boniface, by the consecration of Bisi. In the autumn of the year he arrived at York, where Chad was ruling his vast diocese with singular zeal and winning love. The masterful archbishop was much attracted by the pure character and gentle humility of the saint, but, inflexibly true to his Roman principles, he told him that his consecration to the see, already filled by Wilfrid, was irregular. Chad at once accepted the archbishop's ruling, and meekly insisted on retiring to his old monastery a

Visitation of archbishop Theodore, 669.

Lastingham, while Wilfrid, emerging from his retreat at Ripon, placed his untiring energy at the service of his diocese. The picture which Eddi, his biographer, has drawn of him is indeed that of an ideal organising bishop. Riding through his diocese on frequent tours he held ordinations and confirmations, planted new mission stations, and caused fresh churches to spring up on all sides. Setting to his clergy and people an example of simple and ascetic life, he won their hearts by his genial courtesy, and fired their zeal by his own untiring devotion. But he did not, like S. Aidan and S. Chad, forget the importance of enhancing the outward expression of Church life in the pursuit of personal holiness and the discharge of spiritual duty. He founded a school of Church music and singers, built magnificent stone churches at Ripon and at Hexham, and repaired the cathedral at York, which Chad had suffered to fall into decay. But the Church had need both for the gentle virtues of S. Chad as well as the authoritative zeal of Wilfrid. While Theodore was still in the north there came a request from Wulfhere, king of the Mercians, for a bishop, and the archbishop at once asked Oswiu to allow S. Chad to go. The necessary consent was given; and having submitted to re-consecration by Theodore in order to supplement what, according to Roman eyes, seemed defective in the previous rite, the humble saint fixed his bishop's stool at Lichfield, and spent the remaining years of a noble life as the founder and first occupant of the great midland see. The settlement of the eastern and northern dioceses had taken up most of the year 669. In the following year Theodore completed this work by the consecration of Lothere to be bishop of the West Saxons with his seat at Winchester, which had now taken the place of Dorchester as the episcopal city, and returned to Canterbury in the proud consciousness that all the bishops of England had acknowledged his authority as primate, had accepted the Roman Easter, and owed their orders to Roman sources.

All was thus ready for the next step. In the year 673 Theodore summoned the bishops of his province to meet him

in synod at Hertford on the 24th of September. All obeyed in person or by proxy, and thus was held the first provincial council of the Church of England, the precursor of the present Convocations of the clergy of the provinces of Canterbury and of York, the first organised expression of the living voice of the Church of England. The council, following the usual precedents, passed ecclesiastical laws or canons. The bishops agreed to maintain the Roman Easter, to enforce the ancient canons, and to meet in council once a year. The rest of the canons were mainly taken up with the enforcement of discipline. No bishop was to invade the diocese of another bishop, and no priest to transfer himself to another diocese without permission. No monk was to move from one monastery to another, and the remarriage of persons who have put away their wives was strongly forbidden. It is clear that the object of the archbishop was mainly to increase the authority of the bishops over their clergy, and correct the laxity which had prevailed under the Irish system by giving to the bishop a definite law to enforce, and a definite area in which to enforce it.

The council of Hertford, 673.

Theodore had thus succeeded in establishing his authority over England. He had taken the first great step towards the organisation of the English Church. So far he had met with little or no opposition to his will. The history of his next effort is far different, and gave rise to a controversy which nearly rent the Church in twain. Theodore had convinced himself, no doubt rightly enough, that the English bishopries were far too large, and he had raised the question of division at the council of Hertford without, however, obtaining any definite decision from that body. In the same year he was enabled to bring about the division of the bishopric of East Anglia without difficulty, and consecrated Bedwin to be the first bishop of Elmham. By the withdrawal of bishop Putta to Hereford, in 676, some help was given towards the better fulfilment of episcopal duties in Mercia; but the chief offender in this matter was Northumbria.

Proposed division of dioceses by Theodore.

Wilfrid, from his church at York, ruled over the whole extent of country from the Humber to the Forth. No man, not even a giant in energy and power, could be equal to such a task. Theodore reckoned that four bishops at least were required in the place of one. But in Wilfrid the archbishop knew he had to deal with a man who was singularly tenacious of authority and proudly intolerant of advice. He made up his mind that there was no use at all in trying to obtain Wilfrid's sanction to a scheme of division; so, persuading himself that the end justified the means, he proceeded, with the consent of the king, to divide the diocese of Northumbria into four parts by his own personal authority. Without Wilfrid's consent he consecrated three bishops to the new dioceses of Bernicia, Lindisfarne, and Lindsey, leaving to Wilfrid at York only the larger part of Deira.

Wilfrid at once, in hot indignation, took a step for which probably Theodore was little prepared. Without deigning to plead before the metropolitan or the king, both of whom he looked upon as his enemies, he appealed straight to the pope and left for Rome to urge his cause at the apostolic see. It was the opening chapter of a long, tangled and highly controversial history, which only ended at the crisis of the Reformation in 1534, but it is not to be supposed that Wilfrid realised in any way the importance of the step which he was taking. By appealing to the pope to override and set at naught the action of the ecclesiastical and civil authorities in England, he did not in the least intend to maintain, as a matter of principle, the supremacy of the Roman pontiff over the domestic affairs of the Church of England, much less to admit on behalf of the bishops and clergy of the English Church that they were merely the servants of the pope, exercising his delegated powers. Such views belong to a much later stage in the history of the development of the papacy. To Wilfrid's mind the question was much more simple. He had been grievously wronged by a vindictive king and an arbitrary metropolitan. To whom could he turn for justice? His fellow-

Appeal of Wilfrid to the pope.

bishops were all the nominees of Theodore, and were implicated in his action. But the Church of England owed her very existence to the great see of Rome. The metropolitan himself was appointed to his office but a few years ago, and entrusted with the authority which he had so greatly abused, by the successor of the founder of the English Church. If justice was to be had against Theodore in the whole wide world Rome was the only possible tribunal, and the pope the only possible judge from whence to obtain it.

Attitude of Theodore.

Theodore and Egfrid, the king of Northumbria, on the other hand, must necessarily have seen the matter with other eyes. No king could be indifferent to a claim set up by a subject to invoke at his own will the interference of a foreign authority in the affairs of his kingdom. No metropolitan at that time could admit the claim of a suffragan to drag his superior, whenever he liked, before the judgment seat of the pope. The primacy of the see of Peter, unhistorical though it might be in reality, was at that time believed in as a fact. No one in western Europe, least of all Theodore, would deny that if a serious and doubtful question of Church order arose in his province, the proper course would be to ask the opinion of the pope and act upon it, just as Augustine had done in important matters before. But that was a wholly different thing to an admission of the unlimited right of a bishop or a priest to invoke the interference of the pope whenever he found himself in disagreement with his metropolitan, a doctrine which would logically involve the total loss of independent authority by bishops and metropolitans. Theodore accordingly merely sent a statement of his view of the case to Rome, and quietly went on with his work. Having seen the old bishopric of York duly parcelled out after Wilfrid's flight into those of Lindsey, York, and Lindisfarne, he returned to Canterbury, and in the following year, 680, succeeded in carrying out an extensive division of the Mercian see by the establishment of the bishoprics of Worcester and Leicester.

In the year 680 Wilfrid was back in Northumbria. He had

been received with great honour at Rome. His cause had been heard by pope Agatho and decided in his favour. He had sat as bishop of York in a council held in 680 to deal with the Monothelite heresy. At last, armed with a papal bull drawn up in due legal form directing his reinstatement to his old diocese, he presented himself before Egfrid and the Northumbrian Witan confident of victory. He was rudely disappointed.

Banishment of Wilfrid, 680.

Neither king nor Witan was going to submit to the dictation of a foreign power. They roundly accused Wilfrid of bribing the Roman court, refused to acknowledge the bull, and, after imprisoning him for some time, banished him from the country. He retired to Mercia and then to Wessex, but even there the hate of his enemies pursued him, and at last he took refuge among the heathen South Saxons, where, for six years, he laboured with all imaginable self-sacrifice and zeal to bring those ignorant and barbarous people to a knowledge of the faith. Success crowned his efforts, and just as the first century after the coming of S. Augustine was drawing to a close, the last tribe of the English invaders was gathered into the fold of the Church.

His mission work among the South Saxons.

Meanwhile the indefatigable archbishop went quietly on with the organisation of the Church, wholly unaffected by the adverse decision of the pope. At the beginning of the year 680 he was enabled to divide the huge see of the midlands by the foundation of the bishopric of Worcester and the recognition of that of Hereford. In the autumn of the same year he held the second provincial synod of the English Church at Hatfield. In the year 681 the bishoprics of Hexham and Lindisfarne, which had been united for the time under Eata, were separated, and a new bishopric established on the Firth of Forth for the extreme north of the Northumbrian kingdom. Three years later some further difficulties, the details of which we do not know, brought Theodore once more to Northumbria. In 685 he deposed bishop Trumbert of Hexham, and translated Eata of Lindisfarne

Extension of the episcopate, 680-685.

to the vacant see. On Easter Day, in the same year, he completed his work by the consecration to the see of Lindisfarne of one whose name, next to that of S. Aidan, has gained pre-eminent mastery over the staunch and loving hearts of northern England—Cuthbert, the hermit saint of Farne.

S. Cuthbert at Melrose.

Thirty-four years before, a noble-spirited youth, who like a second David or Giotto had learned to meditate on the things of God while face to face with nature on the wild hills where he kept his sheep, rode with his servant to the gates of the humble monastery of Old Melrose, in the valley of the Tweed. There, exchanging the horn and spear of a well-born thegn for the habit and staff of a monk, he soon became noted among his fellows for the austerity of his life and the beauty of his character. Under Eata the abbot and Boisil the prior of Melrose, he was trained in the school of S. Aidan, and kept with all loyalty and duty the observances of the Church of Iona. In the year of the plague, 664, Cuthbert was named prior of his monastery on the death of Boisil, and then first appeared clearly the greatness of his spiritual powers. What Aidan had been to Northumbria, what Wilfrid was to be to the South Saxons, that was Cuthbert to the districts round Melrose. In him the true spiritual fervour characteristic of the best of the children of S. Columba shone out pre-eminently. Indefatigable in his journeys to hamlets distant and difficult of access, unsparing of himself in his self-sacrifice for others, winning the hardened by the glow of his sympathy, cheering the despairing by the intensity of his faith, conquering the hearts of all by the grace of his personality and the holiness of his life, he was recognised by all men as a true saint, one of those rare spirits whom God from time to time entrusts to the earth.

Made prior of Lindisfarne.

But these days, certainly the happiest, perhaps the most useful, in Cuthbert's life, were not to last long. He was sent by Eata to take charge of the monastery at Lindisfarne and restore it to its ancient discipline, from which it had somewhat fallen away. The task was no easy one. Opposition

and enmity, petty and continuous, dogged and endeavoured to thwart every effort which the prior made. No longer could he compel obedience by his personal gifts, still less enforce it by his official authority. He had to win his way step by step by the example of a perfectly disciplined life, by the gentle appeal of a burning love, by unlimited patience and unfailing temper. With such weapons victory was only a question of time, and so it proved. One by one opponents were conscience-stricken, and won over, bit by bit opposition melted away, and discipline again lifted up her head. In a few years the monastery had become a pattern to the surrounding districts, and Cuthbert felt that he might safely take a step towards which his mind had been for some time tending. He wished, like S. Aidan before him, to embrace a more ascetic form of life than was possible even in the reformed Lindisfarne. Like so many Eastern and Irish saints, he felt that it was only in the complete conquest of the body and the renunciation of ordinary life that perfection was possible in the training of the soul. And so in the year 676 he moved to the neighbouring island of Farne, and building for himself near a spring of clear water a poor hut of stones and turf, he lived for nine years the life of a hermit. The larger part of his time he spent in devotion, providing for his scanty wants by his own labour. Sometimes he would receive visitors with evident pleasure, and deal with their spiritual difficulties with kindly wisdom. Sometimes, when a morbid fit attacked him, he retired for days into complete solitude in the recesses of his hut, or merely advanced to give his blessing through the open window.

His hermit life at Farne, 676.

Such a life, exaggerated though it may be in its avoidance of active duty, cannot fail to have a power and unity about it intensely dramatic. It convinces men of its reality. It appeals to their imagination, it stimulates their thought. It stands out as something so evidently beyond their own capacities that it must be above humanity. So strong was this feeling all over Northumbria, that when in 685 a bishopric was vacant, all men cried out with one voice for the

Made bishop of Lindisfarne, 685.

hermit saint of Farne as bishop. At first sight it seems a strange choice. To take a man from a hermit cell, weakened in body by excessive austerities, and warped in mind by the inevitable results of prolonged seclusion, and set him to rule a large and scattered diocese, to mix among the jars and intrigues of political life, to steer his way amid rival policies and disputing factions, would seem sheer madness to the matter-of-fact man of the world. The Northumbrians of the seventh century argued differently. They wanted the most spiritual man in Northumbria to be their spiritual leader, and they would have none other than Cuthbert. He was elected unanimously at a meeting of the Witan at Alnmouth, and messages were sent to Farne with the news. Cuthbert took no notice whatever. But Northumbria would take no refusal. The king himself, with the leading clergy and thegns, crossed over to Lindisfarne. From thence, accompanied by the brethren of his monastery, they appeared at the door of the saint's cell at Farne, and on their knees implored him to bow his head to the yoke of the episcopate.

Even Cuthbert could refuse no longer. Meekly and sadly he left his cell for two weary years of episcopal duty, fulfilled with an energy and zeal hardly possible in so wasted a frame. But when he felt his strength ebbing and the hand of death approaching, his thoughts returned to his hermitage at Farne. At Christmas 686 he found himself once more in his solitary hut, and there he prepared for death. From time to time his brethren visited him from the neighbouring isle, but he would not permit any to remain a companion of his solitude until his weakness became too great to admit of refusal. As a hermit he had lived, as a hermit he would die. During February and March he got weaker and weaker. At last, on the 20th of March, 687, the end came. After having received the last sacraments he passed quietly away about the time of nocturns, and was buried in the church of Lindisfarne, there to remain until, in after years, the invasion of the Northmen drove him forth in his coffin at the head of his brethren on that wonderful pilgrimage, which finally ended in the great shrine behind the

Death of S. Cuthbert, 687.

high altar of his own cathedral church of Durham, where for five hundred years he peacefully rested, the glory of the most glorious church in England, and the most honoured and loved among the saints of the north.

The year of Cuthbert's episcopate was also the year of a great reconciliation. Egfrid and the abbess Hilda, the chief opponents and enemies of Wilfrid, were now dead. Aldfrid, who had succeeded to the throne, was not actuated by the same personal sentiments. The work of the division of the English dioceses and the establishment of the authority of the metropolitan was now complete. No less than fourteen suffragan bishops acknowledged without question the rule of Canterbury. Theodore felt his work was too strong to be overthrown. In such matters societies do not go backwards. The time had come when he could be generous without danger to the Church, while the splendid work of Wilfrid in the south, where now even the Jutes on the Isle of Wight had become Christian, called for recognition. Negotiations were opened by the archbishop with Wilfrid and Aldfrid, and terms were soon arranged. Nothing was said on one side or the other about the decision of the pope. It was simply ignored. But arrangements were made by which Wilfrid should, as far as possible, receive back for his lifetime his old diocese. Eata, bishop of Hexham, had just died, and Wilfrid at once resumed possession of that part of his see. In the course of the year, the acting bishops of York and Ripon resigned, and Wilfrid added their sees to that of Hexham. In the same way, when Cuthbert died in 687, he also became bishop of Lindisfarne, and thus actually regained the administration of all of his old diocese, except Lindsey, which had now fallen to Mercia, and Lothian, which was in the hands of the Picts. But he regained it only in name, for later in the same year Eadbert was consecrated to Cuthbert's see at Lindisfarne, and John of Beverley to that of Hexham. Perhaps the arrangement was in the nature of a compromise by which Wilfrid was permitted to regain for the moment a diocese coterminous with the kingdom, on condition that he agreed

Reconciliation of Theodore and Wilfrid.

to its immediate division according to the archbishop's scheme.

However that may be, Theodore was evidently the person upon whose influence reconciliation depended, for no sooner did he die in 690 than troubles broke out afresh Aldfrid called upon Wilfrid to make Ripon into a separate diocese altogether. This was to touch Wilfrid in his tenderest point, for the monastery of Ripon was not only his best loved home, but the church was his own building, and on it he had lavished all his money and all his love. To ask him to part with Ripon was to ask of him more than his high spirit would brook. He refused, and was banished. Betaking himself to Mercia, he received a hearty welcome from the king, Æthelred, and was soon placed in charge of the bishopric of Leicester, which he ruled with success until the year 702, when renewed efforts were made to bring the scandal and disagreement to an end. Aldfrid, at the instigation of archbishop Bertwald, who had succeeded Theodore, summoned a conference at Easterfield, at which Wilfrid and most of the English bishops and abbots were present. But argument did not tend to bring about peace. The fault of Wilfrid, in the eyes of his fellow-countrymen, lay not so much in his masterful temper and arrogant claim of superiority, as in his want of patriotism. They could not forgive the man who had sought to coerce his own king, and reverse the decisions of the national Witan by the help of a foreign power, however venerable and sacred. The stubborn narrowness of English patriotism blazed out against outlandish control championed by Wilfrid in the seventh century, just as it did in the Middle Ages against the outlandish friends of Henry III., or the outlandish wife of Henry VI. It was not that the Northumbrian kings and clergy were wanting in respect or reverence for the see of Rome. They were willing to listen to the counsels of the pope with all due deference. But they could not forgive the English bishop who, despising his own national institutions, sought to bring them under the control of the foreigner.

Death of Theodore, 690.

Second banishment of Wilfrid.

Assembly at Easterfield, 702.

Accordingly, at Easterfield, there was little attempt at compromise, but merely a demand for submission. When Wilfrid understood this, his anger burst forth. He renewed his appeal to the pope, and challenged his accusers to meet him face to face before that august tribunal and make good their charges. Undeterred by the weight of sixty-eight years, he undertook a fresh journey to Rome. Again he pleaded his cause before the pope, and claimed on his side the previous decisions of no less than three of his predecessors. Again he proved victorious. After a patient investigation, John VI., assisted by a council of Italian bishops, decided in Wilfrid's favour. But, taught by experience, the pope no longer ordered the reinstatement of Wilfrid in his old see, as Agatho had done, but wrote letters to Aldfrid and archbishop Bertwald, recommending the settlement of the matter by a synod in England in a way agreeable to the decisions of the Holy See. The advice was accepted by Bertwald though not by Aldfrid. But after the death of the latter in 705 a council was held under the nominal presidency of the boy king Osred, in February 706, on the river Nidd, by which Wilfrid was restored to the bishoprics of Hexham and Ripon, and recovered all his domains and monasteries. He did not live long to reap the fruits of his stedfastness. Three years afterwards, when on a visit to his Mercian monasteries, the hand of death overtook him, and he passed to his rest at St. Andrew's, Oundle, in October 709.

Final restoration of Wilfrid, 706.

His death, 709.

With the restoration and death of Wilfrid the story of the organisation of the infant Church of England is complete. It is due mainly to two great men, Theodore and Wilfrid, and due as much to the disagreements which arose between them as to the individual capacity and energy of each. To Wilfrid belongs the credit of uniting the Church of England as a whole to the western Church, and ensuring her progress along the path of civilisation by the adoption of the Roman Easter. To Wilfrid also is due the winning of the last strongholds of English heathenism to the Church in

Comparison of Theodore and Wilfrid.

Sussex and the Isle of Wight, marked by the consecration of the first bishop of Selsey in the very year of his death. In Wilfrid the Church of England gratefully remembers one of the first of her founders and rulers of monasteries, the builder of noble churches, the administrator of well-regulated communities. To Theodore belonged, as was right, the organisation of government. It was his work to introduce law, order, discipline, and subordination into the disorganised and inert mass of English Christianity. England was divided for purposes of administration into territorial bishoprics of an extent not too great for the energies of one man. The episcopate thus formed was duly subordinated to the metropolitan archbishop at Canterbury, not according to the caprice of a despot, but by the adoption of recognised principles of ecclesiastical law. The bishops with their primate were summoned in provincial synod to form a legislative body for the local Church in subordination to the laws and decisions of the œcumenical councils of the Church Universal. The very troubles consequent on the quarrel between the archbishop and Wilfrid in the end served only to intensify the rule of law, for while all attempts on the part of Wilfrid or the pope to overturn the decisions and alter the policy of the national Church in the matter of its own territorial divisions were steadily repulsed, it was none the less clear that no archbishop or king would ever again attempt to interfere with the diocese of a bishop against his will. Thus by the quarrel itself the true principles of episcopal authority and national independence were brought into clearer prominence.

Growth of the Church.

But the growth of the Church did not stop with the organisation of the episcopate or the establishment of provincial councils, or the strengthening of metropolitical authority. Its life flowed on in many other ways besides that of government. Zeal such as that which inspired Theodore and Wilfrid, was equally conspicuous among the families of kings and thegns, and in the huts of the humbler clergy. In tracing the organisation of the Church in England we see three separate lines of growth constantly pursued, each forming an end in

itself, yet incomplete without the others. First, there is the structural organisation—the building up of the Society as an institution, or rather as part of an institution, with its proper officers, its laws, its discipline, its creed. Such was the main work of Theodore, such the line of growth which we have hitherto been chiefly considering. But of what use are officers, and of what advantage is it to entrust them with government, unless they have been duly trained for their work? Consequently, side by side with the growth of organisation comes the growth of education. Each cathedral has its school for the training of the clergy. Each monastery is a home for the encouragement of learning. At Canterbury was established, under the care of Hadrian, the friend and companion of Theodore, a high school or university on a small scale for the teaching of the higher education. A few years later, a similar institution at York provided for the wants of the north, and became no less celebrated than its southern sister.

By organisation.

By education.

Then, lastly, when the Church was organised, when its clergy were trained, came the difficult task of bringing its ministrations within reach of the people—the occupancy of the ground, the feeding of the sheep. To this supreme task the English Church addressed itself in two special ways, which were originally supplementary to one another, but eventually tended to become antagonistic—*i.e.* the parochial system and the monastic system. By the parochial system the whole country was divided into territorial areas varying in size, for each one of which a definite person was responsible in all spiritual matters. To him, the *persona ecclesiæ* or 'parson,' the charge of all the souls in that area was definitely committed by the bishop in institution, and his responsibilities rigidly enforced and his rights carefully maintained by ecclesiastical law. Of course such a system as this must have taken many years to perfect. Difficulty of communication, sparseness of population, paucity of clergy, want of endowment, must have prevented large tracts of England from being formed into definite parishes, with a definite 'parson' for

By the parochial system.

each for a very long time. But it is worth observing that the process began as soon as ever the Church was organised. Notices are extant in Bede of the consecration of churches built for different districts, and of the ordination of priests and deacons to them, as well as of the existence of small churches in villages, which apparently formed centres for the religious worship of the place. Passages in Theodore's Penitential, or instructions to the clergy as to the penances to be inflicted for sin, evidently imply a local ministry. On the other hand, it is equally clear that though begun it was by no means complete in Bede's own life, for in an epistle to Egbert, written shortly before his death, he calls the attention of the bishop to the fact that there are still many townships in Yorkshire without resident clergy.

Supplementary to the parochial system, and in some ways better fitted for the work of feeding the flock in early and unsettled times, was the monastic system. The influence of Iona and the ascetic spirit of the great English missionaries like S. Aidan and S. Chad fixed upon the monastery as the true home of Christian life. As Christianity was spread by them and their followers through the north and the midlands, the monastic system spread too. The mission station became the mission centre, and the mission centre took the form of a religious community, as at Iona itself, or at Melrose, or at Lindisfarne. But the life lived in these humble dwellings was too much impressed with the character of hermit seclusion to become a great and active power in the Church. It wanted the unifying touch of Roman order to raise the scattered collection of hermit cells into a great institution. It needed the inspiration of Roman culture to make the monastic system itself an epitome of the varied life of the Church, and offer in its own precincts, under the safeguard of strict rule, education to the young, study to the learned, contemplation to the spiritual, rest to the weary, incentive to the active, and to all help along the path of holiness disciplined by obedience and encouraged by devotion.

By the monastic system.

Of religious houses of this type the earliest was naturally the

foundation of S. Augustine at Canterbury, in honour of S. Peter and S. Paul, afterwards known as S. Augustine's, the first monastery in England to adopt the rule of S. Benedict of Nursia. But in the latter half of the century, when Northumbria and Mercia were taking the lead in Church and State, the monastic system became quickly spread over the north and midlands. The monasteries were not all of one type, nor did they owe their origin all to one ideal. Some, like those at Winchester and Dorchester and Selsey, were chiefly adjuncts to the cathedral, and maintained the cathedral services and institutions. Some, like S. Hilda's great foundation at Whitby, and those of Coldingham, Ely, Barking and Repton, were double foundations for men and women, who lived apart in separate buildings, but used the chapel in common and owed a common obedience to the same superior. Some, like the Benedictine houses of Wilfrid at Ripon, and of Benedict Biscop at Wearmouth and Jarrow, were especially devoted to learning. They were famous for the magnificence of their stone churches and the rich adornment of glass, gems and embroidery, which five visits to Rome could alone procure. They were still more famous for having been the homes and the training school of Caedmon, the first of English poets, and of Bede, the first of English historians. Hardly second to them in the veneration of Englishmen came the foundation of Malmesbury among the Wilsœtas, which trained the poet, the musician, and the preacher, S. Aldhelm, to be the first bishop of Sherborne and one of the first English men of letters. In this use of monasteries as the nursery of Church life we see that practical spirit which is ever characteristic of Englishmen. They were not to be hermitages or the abodes of recluses, but centres of active usefulness as well as of spiritual growth.

English monasteries.

But in the varied energies of the Church of England room could be found for the solitary life of the hermit, as for the active life of the missionary, or the learned life of the student. Ever and anon some enthusiastic soul, smitten with the vocation of asceticism, morbid perhaps in his

The hermits.

conception of service, but strong in the sincerity of his sacrifice, would leave the ordinary haunts of men and bury himself in lonely isle or stagnant marsh, in complete seclusion from the world. Such was the purpose of S. Etheldreda when she betook herself to the little isle amid the fens of Cambridgeshire, where she raised the humble walls of what was in time to grow into the noble and graceful minster of Ely. Such was S. Cuthbert in his cell at Farne. Such was S. Guthlac, who, choosing out the most cheerless spot he could find amid the swamps of East Anglia, built his hut of twisted osiers by the side of the stagnant pools of black and poisonous water. There, stricken with ague and racked by marsh fever, he fought out dread battles for his soul with the fiend, until his fame as a saint became noised about throughout the country-side, and numbers of weary and unquiet souls, conscience-stricken for their sin, flocked to the little hermitage in the morass to find the sympathy and consolation of one who had fought their battles and knew their trials. After his death willing and reverent hands drained the swamps and reclaimed the marsh, and raised to his memory the famous monastery of Crowland on the site where his hut once stood.

But ever in the Church of England the active life of work has been her real strength rather than the contemplative life of devotion or the hermit life of austerity. Her mission in the Catholic Church has been to do rather than to think or to endure. She has sought her opportunities and found her triumphs, less dramatic but more lasting, in the warfare of the Church in the world, rather than in the spiritual struggles of the hermit's cell or the anchorite's pillar. More typical of her true mission than the life of S. Guthlac of Crowland is that of S. Willibrord, archbishop of the Frisians. Willibrord, by birth a Northumbrian, had been educated at Wilfrid's monastery at Ripon until the age of twenty, when he was drawn to Ireland by the desire to lead a stricter life, and to avail himself of Irish learning. There, in the year 690, he received a summons to take up a work which Wilfrid had left incomplete in Frisia. With twelve companions he landed near the mouth of the Rhine, and

The missionaries.

supported by Pepin d'Heristal, the duke of the Franks, soon made progress enough in the valley of the Meuse to warrant the establishment of a bishopric. In 693 Swidbert was consecrated by Wilfrid as the first missionary bishop of the English Church, the forerunner of Boniface and Patteson, of Steere and of Hannington. By the exertions of Swidbert and his followers, especially those of Winfrid, better known as Boniface, who joined Willibrord in 719, not only the valleys of the Meuse and the lower Rhine, but districts of Westphalia beyond the Rhine were brought to the knowledge of the faith. In 696 Willibrord himself was consecrated by pope Sergius to be archbishop of the Frisians, and placed his bishop's stool at Utrecht, where he laboured until his death in 739. Sixteen years afterwards his pupil and follower, Boniface, who had been consecrated archbishop of Mentz, and was known throughout Christendom as the apostle of Germany, received the crown of martyrdom in Frisia in 755.

The Venerable Bede, 673-735.

While Willibrord and Boniface were carrying the fame of the Church of England to the barbarous tribes of northern Germany in strenuous mission work, another life of no less activity was being lived out in the quiet seclusion of a Northumbrian monastery. Humble and uneventful as were the days of Bede in his monastery at Jarrow, they were days of incessant work and of unexampled fruitfulness. Born in 673, in Northumbria, trained at Jarrow under the eyes of the learned Ceolfrid, the abbot of the monastery, he was blameless in character, diligent in study, absolutely truthful in intention, and simple in expression. Thus he was singularly fitted, both by natural qualifications and by the times in which he lived, to gather up the story of the century which had passed since Augustine landed at Ebbsfleet, and hand on to those who were to come after him the hopes and fears, the trials and the triumphs, which attended the infancy of the Church of England. Had it not been for him that story would never have been told, and the lives of Paulinus and of Theodore, of Aidan and of Cuthbert, would have remained hid in the guesswork of history. But the activity of Bede was

by no means confined to his history of the English Church and his life of S. Cuthbert. He wrote works on rhetoric, astrology, and poetry, and translated parts of the New Testament into English with a commentary. He was engaged on this work when he felt the approaching summons of death. Surrounded by his scholars, who wrote from his dictation as he lay in bed—for he was too weak now to make his own notes and be his own librarian as of old—he worked on with redoubled zeal and unclouded cheerfulness in his anxiety to finish his task while yet life remained. At last all was done but one chapter of S. John's gospel when a severer attack of his illness came on. Sleep forsook him, the weakness increased. It was clear to all that he had but a few hours to live. 'There is still a chapter wanting,' said the monk who attended him, 'but it is hard for thee to question thyself any longer.' Bede roused himself at the words. His will asserted itself. 'It is easily done,' he said. 'Take thy pen and write quickly'; and, sustained by an unconquerable spirit, he began to dictate as the tears of his companions flowed afresh and his life gradually ebbed. An attack of faintness interrupted the work. 'There is but one sentence more, dear master,' pleaded the monk. 'Write it quickly,' murmured Bede, summoning all his strength. 'It is finished now.' 'Yes, all is finished now,' replied the dying man, and, turning his face towards his prayer-desk, he breathed forth in deep thankfulness the *Gloria in excelsis Deo* as he thought of his completed work. And, as the last words of the triumphal hymn died fitfully away, his pure soul passed into the presence of God.

CHAPTER IV

THE ENGLISH CHURCH FROM THE DEATH OF BEDE TO THE COMING OF THE NORMANS

A.D. 735–1042

State of the Church of England at the close of the eighth century.

THE first hundred and fifty years of the life of the Church of England are in many ways the best and the most interesting of the five hundred years which elapsed between the coming of S. Augustine and the Norman Conquest. The Old English race was ever seen at its best in action. It could rise to the height necessary for a great crisis. It could win its country from the Celt with incontestable bravery. It could conquer the conquering Dane with undoubted pluck and endurance. It could defend its chosen king against foreign attack with stubborn pertinacity little less than heroic. So was it with the Church. It could win the English kingdoms one by one from heathenism. It could produce Christian character in all the richness of varied type—the winning and lovable Aidan, the masterful, business-like Theodore, the ascetic Cuthbert, the humble Chad, the mystical Guthlac, the energetic and impetuous Wilfrid, the studious and contented Bede. It could establish a great organisation of provinces and dioceses, of synods and conferences, of monasteries and schools and parishes. It could weld together into one stable fabric the ill-assorted elements of Roman and Celtic Christianity, keeping and utilising with rare skill the best of both systems. It could take the lead in the noble work of the conversion of the German tribes of similar blood. It could teach Englishmen to feel, act, and think as members of one society in the unity of the

Catholic Church. But when the time for energetic action was over, when the work of consolidation succeeded to that of organisation, when the primary duty before the Church was no longer to win but to train, no longer to establish but to develop, no longer to call for great sacrifices and heroic resolutions, but to demand the steady, painful daily building up of character through the replacement of heathen license by Christian discipline, the rough, coarse, passionate nature of our Old English forefathers began to reassert itself, and the barbarian burst through the web of civilisation which Christianity had woven round him.

The troubles which the Old English race had to face and conquer were not the subtle difficulties of the intellect such as absorbed and confused the minds of the eastern peoples. Their homely simple nature was as proof against perversity of thought as the mind of a child. There is no trace of the existence of serious heresy or doubt in the Church of England before the Norman Conquest. There is a singular lack of writings of all sorts, except chronicles, after the death of Bede, and a significant absence of schools of learning or famous teachers. The one man of real intellectual power whom the Church of England produced between the times of Bede and Dunstan, namely Alcuin, left the shores of England early in life, and did his work at the court of Charles the Great, outside the sphere of the influence of the Church of his baptism. Dulness of imagination and want of interest in thought saved England from the restless questionings and innumerable heresies which mar so much of the history of the earlier years of the Church in the east. Good-natured indifference to organisation and want of ambition saved her from the political worldliness of the Church in the west, as directed by the papacy.

But at what a cost! The attempt to solve the secrets of the universe, and the claim to command the obedience of mankind, whatever their faults, do at any rate raise man above himself and stimulate his nobler faculties. Taught by them he knocks at the gates of heaven, and would fain enter it by force; destitute of them he grovels upon the earth, and clings to the mire. And

so it happened with the Church of England. The dull and homely English mind renounced intellectual aspirations. The solid, staunch, but unventuresome English nature despised political ambition. The fervour of self-sacrifice engendered by the struggle after truth gradually oozed away under the complacent influence of custom. Englishmen were left a ready prey to the coarser part of their nature—their passions and their appetites. Gluttony, drunkenness, anger, sloth, and impurity are the vices which canons and penitentials show to have been the besetting sins of the people. Coarse feasts, long drinking bouts, passionate outbursts of ungoverned temper, appear with too persistent regularity amid the scanty records of the time to admit of a doubt that the life of Englishmen in the eighth and ninth centuries was an unintellectual, unrefined, coarse life, in which the Church supinely acquiesced.

Deterioration of the monasteries.

Even before the death of Bede there was evidence that things were on the downward track. Monasteries in England, with very few exceptions, were not governed by a definite, well-established and permanent rule such as those of S. Benedict and S. Basil, but each monastery had its own regulations usually laid down by its founder, and enforceable only by its superior. An opening was thus soon found in the monastic system for gross abuses. It became fashionable for men and women to retire from time to time to monasteries under pretext of more or less real devotion tempered by the pleasures of society. As a natural result, before long the pretext lost its efficacy, and those so-called convents became merely societies of men, or of men and women, who lived together for their own pleasure in accordance with rules which they themselves made. Instead of being homes of religion, they were merely centres of society, and in some cases degenerated into hotbeds of vice. In a letter to Egbert, bishop and afterwards archbishop of York, written in 734, just before his death, Bede calls the attention of the prelate to the growing scandals of this loose and ill-regulated system in words which, though cast in rhetorical form, come plainly from his heart. After his death

things went from bad to worse. The council of Cloveshoo, held in 747, found it necessary to pass definite canons forbidding monasteries to become the resorts of play-actors, musicians, and buffoons, and ordering the clergy to avoid drunkenness, and especially not to drink early in the day. The Penitential of archbishop Egbert, compiled probably about 766, recognises the coarsest of vices as common even among the priesthood, and apportions to them penances by no means too severe.

With the lowering of morality went hand in hand the decay of learning, and when Ælfred succeeded to the throne in 876 he tells us himself that he could not remember one priest south of the Thames who could render his service-book into English. Even the unity of the Church was impaired during the dreary years which elapsed between the death of Bede and the accession of Ælfred, and a step backward was taken in organisation. A tendency showed itself to make the Church follow the political divisions of the kingdom, instead of leading the kingdom on towards her own unity. In 734 the archbishopric of York was revived in the person of Egbert, his province being practically coterminous with the great kingdom of Northumbria, still among the most powerful of English kingdoms. Fifty years later, when Northumbrian supremacy had quite passed away, and Offa, the great king of the Mercians, had lifted the midland kingdom into the pride of place vacated by Northumbria, he thought it essential to the dignity of Mercia that the Church in his dominions should be Mercian. Accordingly he applied to the pope to raise Lichfield to the rank of an archiepiscopal see. Two legates were sent to England by Adrian I. to settle this and other matters; and at a council held at Chelsea in 787 at which they were present a division of the province of Canterbury was effected. Higbert, bishop of Lichfield, became archbishop and metropolitan, with precedence over the archbishop of Canterbury, having as his suffragans the bishops of Worcester, Hereford, Leicester, Sherborne, Elmham, and Dunwich, leaving to the

Decay of learning.

Revival of the archbishopric of York, 734.

Temporary establishment of an archbishopric at Lichfield, 787.

metropolitan of Canterbury only the bishops of Rochester, London, Winchester, and Selsey. If this fatal policy of disintegration had been persisted in, if Wessex, when in its turn it achieved political leadership in England, had insisted on making the bishop of Winchester metropolitan of Wessex, the Church of England would have become dependent on the royal power, and purely provincial instead of national in character. It would have lost its commanding influence as the one institution in England stable and united among the shifting quicksands of politics and the jarring of ambitions, and the English nation would have lost its best guide to national unity. From this it was saved by the good sense of the English people. Kenwulf, the son and successor of Offa, was statesman enough to see the mistake which his father had made, and personally wrote to pope Leo III. asking him to reverse the arrangement of his predecessor. Leo gave his consent to a return to the old state of things, and at a council held at Cloveshoo in 803, the archbishopric of Lichfield was formally abolished and the province reunited to that of Canterbury. It is worth notice that, although care was taken to procure the approval of the pope to the contemplated changes, the authority by which the archbishopric was actually established and afterwards abolished was not that of the pope or a papal bull, but of the national synods of the English Church.

From this condition of lethargy and degradation the Church of England was suddenly roused by the trumpet-call of national disaster. Hardly had Egbert, king of Wessex, become overlord of all England by the defeat of the Mercians at Ellandun in 825, and the submission of Northumbria in 827, than he had to fight, not for supremacy, but for very existence. In the early years of the ninth century the extreme north suddenly opened her icy jaws, and poured down a flood of barbarians upon the richer lands to the south. Swedes, Norwegians, and Danes, impelled by the love of adventure and the greed of plunder, like Angles, Saxons, and Jutes three centuries before, drove their long flat-bottomed boats

Invasion of the Northmen, 827-871.

up the creeks and estuaries which indent the coast-lines of England, Ireland, and France. They spread over the land in predatory hordes, ravaging fields, destroying villages, and burning churches and monasteries. In 794 Jarrow and Lindisfarne fell before their onset, and the monks of S. Cuthbert had to seek inland a safer resting-place for their patron's body. In 836 a conquering host from Ireland landed in Dorsetshire, and sternly disputed with Æthelwulf for the very heart of Wessex. Thirty years later, a combined attack from Ireland and Scandinavia wrested Northumbria and East Anglia from the feeble hold of Wessex, and gave to the English Church one of her most popular martyr-saints in Eadmund, under-king of East Anglia, who was bound to a tree and shot to death by arrows on a spot where in aftertimes rose in his honour the great abbey of Bury S. Edmunds. Flushed with their triumph, the barbarians determined to make an end at once of English kingship and English religion. The monasteries of Crowland, Peterborough, and Ely were committed to the flames. Their leader, Guthrum, assumed the title of king, and in 871 moved up the Thames upon Wessex to complete his conquest. Gradually the toils closed round the ill-fated English. From Mercia in the north, up the Thames from the east pressed the invading hordes. In spite of checks and temporary rebuffs, the flood poured on. From the Danish fleet, which had worked its way round the coasts of Dorset, suddenly appeared a fresh band which seized upon the high ground about Exeter in the rear of the English. Cut off from possible retreat into the mountains of Cornwall, and hemmed in on all sides, the harassed English betook themselves in despair to the inaccessible swamps of the Parret.

But from the morasses of Athelney came, like a second David from the rocks of Engedi, a hero and a saviour. In Ælfred, the real founder of English national greatness, the world has agreed to recognise the pattern of Christian royalty. No speck of self-seeking or of brutality mars the brightness of that sunny life. It is as though the Old English blood, when just about to mingle with Danish and Norman strain,

Character of Ælfred.

determined to prove its intrinsic worth by producing an Ælfred. Never was a character of more perfect balance, never a life more nobly consistent, for both were disciplined under the guidance of one great principle—the love of God. Ælfred was not merely a religious man in the intelligence and steadfastness of his faith, the reality of his devotion, or the careful performance of religious duty, as Charles I. or George III. were religious men. Still less was he one who, like Oliver Cromwell or Philip II., permitted the intensity of religious conviction to degenerate into the championship of a political cause. Rather was he, like S. Louis, S. Bernard, or Thomas Ken, one to whom the example of Christ was a principle of life, which inspired, ennobled, and disciplined every thought and action all the more perfectly because unconsciously. In all history there is hardly another instance of opportunities so great and of gifts so rare combined with the moral elevation and religious principle necessary to utilise them to the best advantage. Perhaps no one in high station ever managed to show the identity of duty towards God and duty to his people—that most crucial test of perfect Christian life—with such reality and simplicity as did Ælfred. His religion sanctified his statesmanship without narrowing it, his statesmanship kept his religion free from all taint of morbidity without making it worldly. His sunny, bright, and lovable nature never withered under the discipline of physical pain or political adversity. His love of books and zeal for learning never made him despise his rough and illiterate companions. Methodical and business-like in habits, he never became hard or morose, nor did his ceaseless activity render him impatient or domineering. Frank, genial, and open-hearted, he loved to mingle with his thegns, take his part in the singing in the long winter evenings, talk over the mysteries of their craft with his falconers and huntsmen, assist his builders and smiths in their designs by the criticism of an educated taste, question travellers from over the sea of foreign lands and strange manners. Or in the early morning of summer he would gather his learned friends around him, and work at his translation of the *Consolations* of Boethius, or the *Pastoral* of Gregory the Great, or the

Ecclesiastical History of Bede, until the hour for prayer struck, and after the morning mass was said the kingly duties of the day began. No wonder that men loved Ælfred as children love their father. No wonder that his memory has come down to us as that of the noblest and best of English kings. 'So long as I have lived' he said as his life drew to a close, 'I have striven to live worthily.' No king could desire a nobler epitaph, and for ten centuries Englishmen have by their love for him acknowledged that the claim was true.

The successive deaths of his brothers in the struggle with the Danes left Ælfred at the age of thirty the nominal king of Wessex and overlord of England. In reality he was but the master of a few hundred acres of marshland in Somersetshire. Not for one moment, however, did he despair. Quietly during the long winter months of the year 878 he organised his forces. Issuing forth from his island fastness at the first summons of spring he fell upon the invading host at Ethandun, completely defeated it, and obliged Guthrum to accept peace on the terms of a division of territory and identity of religion. By the peace of Wedmore all Northumbria, all East Anglia, and that part of Mercia east of a line drawn roughly from Reading to the Peak, was surrendered to the Danes; while Ælfred regained actual sovereignty over Western Mercia and all England south of the Thames. But the importance of the peace is not to be measured by the amount of land divided among the competitors. It put an end to the period of invasion and conquest. It turned the Danes from robbers and plunderers into settlers. It brought them in their portion of the country—the Danelagh—face to face with a large subject population of a higher civilisation and a purer religion. It necessitated intimate relations with Wessex, which under Ælfred soon began to set a notable example of a civilised Christian State. The acceptance of Christianity by Guthrum showed some perception of these facts, and made the gradual assimilation of the two peoples more easy. Superiority of religion and culture could not fail to tell. During the sixty years which

Peace of Wedmore, 878.

Battle of Brunanburh, 937.

followed the peace of Wedmore, the Danelagh gradually and slowly shrank before the civilisation and the arms of Wessex, until by the final victory of Brunanburh, gained by Æthelstan the grandson of Ælfred in 937, all England was once more united under the sceptre of the descendants of Cerdic.

Meanwhile the work of the building up of the Church after so serious a blow went steadily on. The crying need was the want of men of sufficient education to be made bishops, and many sees were left vacant for years because there were no persons fit to fill them. Most of the scholars who graced Ælfred's court were brought by him from foreign countries. Grimbald came from S. Omer in France, John from Germany, and the most famous of all of them, Asser, from Wales. Fortunately in Plegmund, who was taken by Ælfred from a hermit's cell near Chester, Canterbury found an English archbishop thoroughly worthy of his see. Schools were at once begun where practicable, including one for the sons of nobles at the court itself. Standard works of the time in Latin were translated into English, largely by the king's own hand, and copies sent to each diocese. In this way a great impulse was given to English literature, which had hitherto consisted of little except battle-songs and the poems of Caedmon. The interests of justice too were not neglected. Both Ælfred and his grandson Æthelstan issued codes of laws which, like most early criminal laws, imposed a penance to the Church for the sin involved, as well as a fine to the injured party for the wrong done. Shortly after the death of Ælfred the effect of his wise encouragement of learning was seen in the consecration of no less than seven new bishops in the year 909; while the formation of the new sees of Crediton and Ramsbury and Wells raised the numbers of the episcopate in England to the figure at which it practically remained until the Reformation.

Revival of religion under Ælfred.

The conquest and settlement of the Danelagh by the Northmen probably did more than anything else to unite all Englishmen eventually in one nation, for nothing could make Northumbrian, Mercian, and West Saxon forget their private

enmities so readily as the presence of the foreigner and the conqueror in the heart of their common fatherland. Resistance to a common enemy gave them a common cause for which to live and to die. Loyalty to a common leader turned the king of Wessex into a national champion. In the misfortunes of Æthelwulf and Æthelred all England felt a common loss. They saw in the victories of Ælfred, of Æthelflæd, and of Æthelstan, the achievements of a nation, not the feats of a conqueror. The song of Brunanburh is a national epic, not a personal panegyric. But the very circumstances which hastened the progress of England towards unity as a nation tended to impair the unity which the Church had already attained. This happened in various ways. From the time of Egbert, 827, political leadership in England definitely centred in the house of Cerdic. It was clear that if England was able at all to resist the Northmen and achieve unity of government, it could only be by the extension of the power of the West Saxon king over the rest of the country. Political freedom was bound up with West Saxon supremacy. But in the affairs of the Church, Wessex was far behind all the other districts of England. Its two huge unwieldy dioceses of Winchester and Sherborne, with their pathless morasses and dense tracts of forest, required subdivision as unquestionably as did the diocese of Northumbria in the time of Wilfrid. It was only in the days of Egbert that the Church in Wessex had succeeded in bringing the Celtic population of Cornwall to the obedience of Canterbury. Kent itself, though nominally subject to Wessex, continually chafed against her chains and attempted to regain her independence. It was difficult for the Kentish metropolitan to assert any real power of ecclesiastical government over a suzerain nation with which, in his civil capacity, he was on terms of enmity. It was not until events made Ælfred the national champion, and enabled him to choose his own archbishop, that Kent finally put aside her dreams of independent ambition, and archbishop and king were able to work together for the common good in a

Effect of the Danish invasions on the Church.

Increased influence of Wessex.

stricter alliance than had been before possible. During the ninth century the supremacy of Wessex meant that political leadership lay in that part of the country where the Church was least efficient, and where she had least power of government.

While this was the state of affairs in the south-west, the whole of the north and east were for the time almost lost. Ever since the days of Oswald and Aidan, the Church of Northumbria had shone pre-eminent over English Christianity. It had nursed the greatest saints, it had trained the greatest missionaries. It was now reft for a time from the southern province, and permanently reduced to comparative isolation. The archbishop of York became for a few years quite independent of Canterbury or of Wessex. During the long struggle between his Danish masters and his English fellow-countrymen, he sided quite as often with the one as with the other. When eventually he gave in his adherence to the West Saxon kings, it was found prudent to procure a guarantee of his fidelity by bestowing the bishopric of Worcester, in the southern province, either upon him or upon one of his near relatives. Practically, from the time of Æthelwulf to the time of Eadgar, the church of Canterbury exercised little influence over the province of York. But this was not all. The organisation of the Church in the province of York itself suffered terribly. The bishoprics of Lindisfarne and Hexham disappeared under the pressure of the Northmen, and the only suffragan of which the archbishop of York could boast for many hundred years was the bishop of Chester-le-Street, or Durham,[1] until the see of Carlisle was added in the middle of the twelfth century. Still more irreparable was the overthrow of the great monasteries of the north and east. Lindisfarne, Wearmouth, Jarrow, Crowland, Peterborough, Ely followed one another in quick succession along the path of destruction. Books, works of art, vestments, embroideries, all perished in a common

Isolation of Northumbria.

Destruction of the monasteries.

[1] Ealdhun translated the see of Lindisfarne from Chester-le-Street to Durham in the year 995.

ruin. But the loss of things of material beauty or usefulness was not the worst. The buildings rose again, it is true, from their ashes in renewed beauty. Numbers soon flocked once more into their cloisters. The holy chant again rose at the appointed hours. The school was reopened, and the old life began again. But in many cases, though it was the old routine, it was not the old life. Traditions had been irretrievably lost. The spirit of the place had departed, and a perfunctory life of easy retirement took the place of the fervour of disciplined love.

The combined effect of the policy of Offa, the supremacy of Wessex, and the conquest of the Danelagh was largely to destroy discipline as well as learning in the Church of England. We have seen how the monastic system had been gradually deteriorating from the time of Bede, and how low the standard of learning had reached in the days of Ælfred. Similar deterioration was visible elsewhere. Bishops were becoming much more secular in their habits of life. Under the pressure of the Danish invasion they took to arms and became leaders of armies. The evil custom began to grow up for one bishop to hold more than one see. Soon they were chosen by the kings to act as ministers or as ambassadors. Their ecclesiastical duties became more and more neglected. The councils of the Church on which so much stress had been laid by Theodore were no longer held, and such legislation as the courtier bishops desired was passed as state law by king and Witan. These evils could not all be dealt with by Ælfred and his successors. Some of them were the natural results of the establishment of a national kingship, and were looked upon probably by even the best men of that time rather as evidence of the close unity of interest between the nation and the Church, than of the sacrifice of the well-being of the Church in favour of the nation. All that the Church revival of the days of Ælfred could do was to raise the standard of learning and life among the clergy. That, after making due allowance for the difficulties of the time, it succeeded in doing. The English clergy of the

Worldliness of the higher clergy.

tenth and eleventh centuries compare favourably on the whole with those of the rest of Europe, but the period no doubt is one in which the state of the western Church generally left much to be desired.

Reform of the monastic system.

The next step to be undertaken was the revival of discipline. No sooner had the Church finally emerged from the struggle with the Danes, than she addressed herself seriously to the question. Reform was urgently needed both among the monks and the parish clergy. The evil of the English monastic system lay in the independence of each monastery. Governed by their own rule administered by their own officers, without the incentive of friendly rivalry or the correction of superior authority, the monasteries inevitably tended, as small corporations have in all times tended, insensibly to slide from lofty severity of purpose into easy-going acquiescence in a low standard of life. In order to drag them from this slough it was necessary to bind them together in common obedience to one law, to bring to bear upon them from outside the weight of an acknowledged and definite authority, and to move them from inside by the impulse of corporate opinion. The machinery was ready for the purpose. Four centuries before, similar difficulties in Europe had been overcome by the adoption by all monasteries of the rule which S. Benedict of Nursia had drawn up with consummate skill and wisdom for his own foundation at Monte Cassino. Since his time the Benedictine rule had spread all over the western Church. Wilfrid and Benedict Biscop had introduced it into England at Ripon and Wearmouth, but the times were not favourable to its growth. It was looked upon as a foreign institution, and apparently was soon discarded or became gradually altered. In the tenth century there was not a single religious house in England which professed the rule of S. Benedict, and when Odo, archbishop of Canterbury, determined to become a Benedictine monk, he had to go to Fleury in France to be professed, where the rule had lately been established in its purest form. Thus Fleury, not Monte Cassino, became the mother of reformed English monasticism. Odo returned to his

archbishopric a professed monk in 942, and immediately devoted his bustling energies to the extension of the Benedictine rule over English monasteries.

In this he found in Dunstan, who had been lately appointed abbot of Glastonbury, a strenuous supporter. Dunstan was a West Saxon by birth and a nephew of Athelm, archbishop of Canterbury in the time of king Æthelstan. He was one of those rare natures on whom are lavished the choicest gifts of body and mind. Master of all that Glastonbury school could teach him, of singular personal beauty and attractive manners, a true artist accomplished in metal work, in illumination, and in music, he united to these gifts deep religious conviction and earnest purpose of life. The lessons of a severe illness and disappointed love withdrew him from the court of Æthelstan, where his talents had shone so brightly, to a humble cell near Winchester, where he devoted himself to his art work and fought, like S. Guthlac at Crowland or Luther at the Wartburg, personal encounters with the Evil One. Drawn from thence at the summons of king Eadmund, he suddenly found himself in 940 nominated abbot of the monastery of Glastonbury, and consulted by the king in matters of state. From that time until his death in 988 he was one of the foremost of English statesmen and ecclesiastics, the first of that long line of statesmen-ecclesiastics which numbers in its ranks the honoured names of Lanfranc and S. Thomas, of Stephen Langton and Chichele, of Thomas Wolsey and William Laud.

S. Dunstan, 940-988.

His first care was to introduce the rule of S. Benedict into his monastery at Glastonbury, and to urge the zeal of his newly professed monks into the work of education to which the Benedictines were then, as they still are, specially devoted. Under his care Glastonbury became the centre of English higher education, a sort of university on a small and rough scale. But soon the orders of the king forced him to devote his attention to the affairs of the nation rather than to those of his monastery. The conquest of Strath-

His reforms at Glastonbury, 940.

clyde by king Eadmund and the consequent settlement of the north enabled Dunstan to initiate the policy of peace and assimilation, founded upon trust, which is at once the boast of his statesmanship and the proof of his Christianity. But not to Dunstan any more than to any one else did success and authority come without trouble and struggle. The tragic death of Eadmund in 946, stabbed to the heart in a personal affray at his own table by the robber thegn Leofa—a scene so characteristic of the boorish life of our forefathers—plunged England into confusion for twelve years. Amid the darkening mists of revolts in the Danelagh and commotion in the north, of deepening rivalry between the Church reformers and the friends of the old system, of personal quarrels between princes and ealdormen and thegns, which cloud the picture of these weary years, the figure of Dunstan insensibly dilates on the canvas. We are conscious that, on the death of Eadred in 955, he stands out among his rivals as the first of Englishmen. Even the new king Eadwig could not withstand him. Every one knows the lurid story of the infatuation of the young king for the worthless and ambitious Æthelgifu, and how he sought to withdraw to her society in the very midst of his coronation feast, and was roughly dragged back to his seat by Dunstan at the bidding of the assembly, as the speaker was held in his chair by the House of Commons seven centuries later. The insult brought matters to a crisis, and soon showed who was the true master of England. For the moment Dunstan had to fly. Eadwig married the daughter of Æthelgifu, and began to wreak a petty vengeance on the Benedictine monasteries which supported Dunstan. The Church took up his quarrel. Odo the archbishop pronounced the marriage of Eadwig incestuous and void. Mercia and Northumbria rose in revolt and transferred their allegiance to Eadgar. It was the first time that the Church had taken the lead in a political revolution. It marks the increasing influence of the Church in public affairs. It is evidence of the growing secularity of bishops and abbots, and of the closeness of the tie between Church and State. It is also an indication

His pre-eminence in England, 955.

of an enlarged conception of duty on the part of the Church towards the nation in the endeavour to preserve it from evil rulers, to assist it in securing its just liberties, and directing it in a right policy.

In the question between Eadwig and Dunstan there can be no doubt as to the side on which the interests of the nation and of religion lay. The timely death of Eadwig in 958 saved England from a civil war. Eadgar succeeded peaceably to the throne. With his accession Dunstan returned to power. In 959 he became archbishop of Canterbury, and during the sixteen years of the reign of Eadgar and the few months of that of his son, Eadward the Martyr, he was the virtual ruler of England. To him is mainly to be attributed the policy of conciliation which removed all difference between Englishman and Dane in England, and placed men of Danish blood in some of the highest posts in the land. To him is largely due the imperial position assumed by Eadgar as overlord of the whole island of Great Britain, which the story of the celebrated pageant on the Dee, when six tributary kings are said to have rowed their suzerain in his barge, so well illustrates. To him may fairly be attributed much of the increased communication with the continent, which is characteristic of this time, and the enlightened policy which made London one of the chief trading centres of the western seas.

His national policy, 959-975.

In carrying out his ecclesiastical reforms Dunstan was content to leave to others the actual administration of affairs, while he merely retained for himself a general superintendence. He held no synods, he passed no laws, he issued no instructions, he held no visitations, but he was careful to appoint to positions of influence those who would carry out the policy of which he approved. One of his first acts on becoming primate was to consecrate his friends Ælfstan and Oswald to the sees of London and Worcester in 961. Two years later he consecrated Æthelwold to the see of Winchester, who as abbot of Abingdon had introduced the Benedictine rule into that important monastery. Under the

Encouragement of the rule of S. Benedict.

influence of these prelates the Benedictine rule soon began to flourish in England. As many as forty new Benedictine foundations, it is said, were established in the reign of Eadgar alone, while many of the older monasteries adopted the rule either under the pressure of authority or because they recognised its worth. The chief difficulties were experienced with the monasteries attached to cathedrals, the inmates of which in some places, such as Canterbury and Winchester, had given up all attempt to keep a monastic rule, and had become merely secular canons. At Winchester and Worcester the canons were expelled after a considerable struggle, and Benedictine monks introduced. At Canterbury and York the canons were permitted to remain, but they were obliged to accept and observe a definite rule.

Similar tenderness of treatment, which refused to treat all cases alike by a hard and fast law, is observable also in the policy of Dunstan with regard to the marriage of the clergy. In the early Church marriage after ordination had never been permitted, but, though celibacy had always been considered the higher life in accordance with the teaching of S. Paul, marriage had never been treated in any way as a bar to ordination. In all probability the bulk of the parish clergy were married before ordination, as they invariably are in the present day in the Orthodox Church. The irruption of the northern barbarians, however, made a great difference. They brought under Christian discipline a rude and uncontrollable vitality which was too untrained to accept restrictions of an artificial kind, however defensible on principle. The standard of severity began to decline. In some parts of the western Church, and apparently in England, it became not uncommon for priests to marry, even after ordination. Celibacy certainly became the exception rather than the rule. What had been looked upon by the Church as a concession to weaker natures became the normal habit of life. This state of things had its good side as well as its bad. It saved the early English Church from much of the moral scandal which is the unfailing attendant on a policy of great strictness. On the other hand, it tended to lull the conscience

And of clerical celibacy.

to rest in just the very kind of matter in which our old-English forefathers wanted rousing. The tendency to be content with a comfortable, slothful, easy-going standard of life was their special temptation. The disinclination to accept a severe ideal was their characteristic. For them, therefore, or for the best of them, a policy of clerical celibacy, put forward as a standard attainable by some and not as a rule to be obeyed by all, was in a high degree desirable. This is just what Dunstan and his friends endeavoured to do. They put no disability on clerical marriage, they even recognised it as existing and likely to exist in their legislation, but they steadily encouraged celibacy, and tried thus to teach the clergy voluntarily to place themselves under a higher law of discipline.

Estimate of S Dunstan's work.

At the accession of Æthelred the Redeless in 979 Dunstan withdrew from public life and spent his nine remaining years quietly at Canterbury, busy with prayer and psalmody, with music and the making of musical instruments, especially bells and organs, and with the correction of the manuscripts in the cathedral library. But as he looked out upon the world which he had left he cannot but have felt that he had been permitted to set his mark for good upon the English Church. The revival of discipline is always a delicate and slow process. It must necessarily meet with much hindrance and many enemies. No man can expect to do more than to begin and to help. All had not gone straightforwardly with Dunstan. Reaction asserted itself, as was natural. When the pressure of the dominant will was taken away, old habits, old sloth raised their heads again. But, nevertheless, the Church of England was better than it was when he emerged from his cell at Winchester. Scattered over the length and breadth of the country were bodies of monks living under a definite rule of great strictness and obedient to it, setting an example of true monastic life. Under their care were growing up hundreds of boys of the best youth of England, fitting themselves by intellectual and moral learning for the service of England in Church and State, while among the parish clergy was implanted a

principle of greater sacrifice of themselves to their vocation, which could not fail to bear fruit, if tenderly and wisely dealt with, in great increase of spiritual efficiency. There are not many men who can boast on laying down their work that so much of it has been good.

Hardly had Dunstan been gathered to his rest in 988 when his work was put to the rude test of foreign invasion. The Danes once more appeared on the coasts of England, this time not merely in scattered bands of plunderers and spoilers, but in the orderly array of a conquering army under their jarls and their king. It seemed as if the dial of history had gone back a century, and the infant nationality of England was again at the mercy of Guthrum and his hordes under the guise of Swegen and his army. But in reality the work of Ælfred, of Æthelstan and of Dunstan proved its strength by the very completeness of the overthrow which it appeared to sustain. To meet this fresh crisis of her fate England could not produce even a capable or honest leader, much less a hero. Perhaps the concentration of power in the hands of the crown, which had characterised the reigns of Æthelstan and Eadgar, told with fatal force against the nation when a foolish pride and a vacillating will were the chief attributes of its king. Perhaps the gloomy forebodings which seized so powerfully upon the imagination of Christendom at the close of the tenth century, and persuaded men by a curious misreading of prophecy that the end of the world was at hand, unstrung their nerves and made them incapable of vigorous defence. Whatever the explanation may be, the fact remains that never did Englishmen fight with less stubbornness and zeal for their homes and their country than they did against Swegen and his brutal followers. For the first time in English history the lurid figure of a national traitor is seen on the stage in Eadric Streona, and the counsels of cowardice prevail when archbishop Sigeric bribed the invading armies to retire.

Renewal of the Danish invasions, 988.

None the less it is the Church which produces the only heroic figure of this miserable time, and eventually leads captive the

conqueror. Few men have played a difficult part with more nobility of soul than did Ælfeah, archbishop of Canterbury. Besieged in his own cathedral city by an overwhelming force of the invading hosts, he was the life and soul of the defence. For twenty days by word and example he quickened the zeal of the defenders and kept the foe at bay. Betrayed at last not overcome, he was seized by the conquerors and put to a ransom of 3000 silver pieces. Had he, like Hezekiah, used the treasures devoted to God for his own advantage, the money could easily have been found in the spoils of the churches of his province, but this he absolutely refused to do or allow others to do for him. Without this there was no possibility of ransom, as he well knew. For seven weary months he was dragged about in chains by his captors in the hope that misery and want would break down his resolution, but in vain. At last they could wait no longer. On the 19th of April 1011 they held high festival at Greenwich, and as they poured the strong sweet mead down their throats they remembered in their drunkenness the obstinate prisoner whose silly scruples barred the way between themselves and riches. They summoned the archbishop to their orgie, as the Philistines of old summoned Samson, and with loud cries assailed him, demanding the gold and threatening his life. But neither threat nor insult had power over the patient soul of Ælfeah. To him death had no terrors. Exasperated at his calmness, one of the ruffians seized an ox bone from the board at which they had been dining and threw it at the archbishop. In a moment the floodgates of passion were opened, and Ælfeah fell to the earth maimed and bleeding under a storm of blows, till one of the band put an end to his torture in cruel mercy by cleaving his head open with his battle-axe. So died Ælfeah, with a fortitude worthy of his cause. Nor had he long to wait for the due recognition of his virtues. The flight of Æthelred in 1013 left Swegen undisputed master of England, but on the death of the Danish king in the following year a hotly contested struggle took place between his son Cnut and Eadmund Ironsides, the son of Æthelred, which eventually

Murder of archbishop Ælfeah, 1011.

ended in a partition of the kingdom in 1016. Shortly afterwards the untimely death of Eadmund left Cnut sole king, and then it was that the influence of the Church and the effects of the organisation of Æthelstan and Dunstan became fully visible.

The reign of Cnut, 1017-1035.

Cnut is one of the most striking instances in history of a man who learned to act on Christian principles when in power, and his life accordingly shows a regular and distinct advance towards a higher standard. As a king he adopted the policy of Dunstan, made no difference between Dane and Englishman, meted out perfect justice to both, and sought to raise the civilisation of his own country by the employment of Englishmen in Denmark, rather than to gratify the pride of his countrymen by placing Danes in command in England. He endeavoured to reign as an English king, and encouraged by his patronage those who were opposed to foreigners. As a churchman he was devoutly religious. He encouraged pilgrimages to Rome, and went there himself. In his ecclesiastical laws he lays great stress on the spiritual side of the priestly life, and the necessity of discipline for the due training of the soul. He was an enlightened supporter of the monastic system, and made the foundation of S. Eadmund at Bury into a Benedictine abbey. But nothing perhaps better shows the true bent of his mind and the deep-seated earnestness of his character than the letter which he wrote to his people in 1028. 'I have vowed to God,' said the king, 'to lead a right life in all things, to rule justly and piously my realms and subjects, and to administer just judgment to all. If heretofore I have done aught beyond what was just through headiness or negligence of youth, I am ready, with God's help, to amend it utterly. . . . I have sent this letter before me that all the people of my realm may rejoice in my well-doing, for as you yourselves know, never have I spared and never will I spare to spend myself and my toil in what is good and needful for my people.'

The truth of this letter became abundantly evident directly Cnut was dead. So much had he thought of his people and so little of himself that he had sacrificed his dynasty to them. His

rule was personal, and depended on the strength of his own character and nothing else. Directly that prop was removed it fell to pieces. His two sons, Harold Harefoot and Harthacnut, were worthless barbarians in comparison with him, and on the fortunate death of the latter at a drinking bout in 1042 the government fell naturally back into the hands of the old line of kings. 'All the people received Eadward for king as was his natural right,' and with the accession of Eadward the Confessor, the son of Æthelred and the Norman Emma, opens the first act of the drama of the Norman Conquest.

CHAPTER V

THE NORMAN CONQUEST

1042-1087

DURING the twenty-six years in which the sceptre of England lingered in the nerveless hands of Eadward the Confessor, there were two parties struggling for the mastery in his realm, the party of the patriots and the party of the foreigners. At the head of the former stood Godwine, the great earl of the West Saxons. Rewarded for his valour in the field and his sagacity in the council chamber with the richest of English earldoms, he soon became the bulwark of English patriotism and the pride of the English nation. Ruler of half England, father to the queen, wise in statesmanship, convincing in speech, he overshadowed the throne of Eadward by his power, but overshadowed it only to strengthen it and protect it.

Position of Godwine.

But the throne which Godwine could secure against open enemy or secret traitor he was powerless to defend against the king himself. Weak in body, small in mind, easily flattered and easily deceived, Eadward redeemed his character from petulance by a winning grace of disposition, and from harmfulness by an unaffected piety. A loyal, generous, and loving son of the Church, he yet owed his formal title to saintship more to the tender traditions which gathered round the last of the old English kings and the builder of the great abbey church at Westminster than to the simple faith and devotional practice which marked his religious life. He was Norman in speech, Norman by education, Norman in sympathy. He disliked the rude and homely people over whom he was

Character of Eadward.

summoned to rule. He distrusted the wife whom policy had forced him reluctantly to marry. He chafed against the iron will and resented the outspoken bluntness of the earl to whom he owed his crown. He determined to form a party from among his own friends and men of his own speech, with whose help he might free himself from the tutelage under which he laboured.

No wonder that the eyes of Eadward were dazzled by the brilliancy of the Norman race. Ever since the days when Rolf the Northman had won his duchy of Normandy by the sword in 912, and secured it by his acceptance of Christianity, the Normans had played no small part in the world. Rapidly assimilating French speech and French civilisation, infusing French quickness and vivacity into the deep but impetuous current of the northern character, bringing the fervid and imaginative religious spirit of Scandinavia under the orderly discipline of the western Church, the Normans claimed the leadership of the world in the eleventh century, because they were best fitted to lead it. From Normandy came the conquerors of Sicily and the saviours of Rome. In Normandy blossomed the fairest flowers of western monasticism in the famous houses of Bec, of Jumièges, and of S. Evroul. To Normandy came Lanfranc of Pavia, the first of European scholars, to push his way to fame and honours. In Normandy was trained Anselm of Aosta, the greatest of European saints, the noblest of mediæval thinkers. Among Normans were developed the grandeur of conception, the richness of fancy, and the technical skill which have made the northern form of Romanesque building one of the permanent artistic glories of the world. Above all, the Normans had become the staunch friends of the papacy. But lately admitted within the pale of Christian civilisation, they were impressed with the imposing character of the papal claims and accepted them wholesale. They recognised the necessity of a strong central moral force in Europe, and were not insensible to the advantages which they gained for themselves by becoming the protectors and champions of the Church. Wherever the

Character of the Normans.

Norman went he took with him a deep sense of the power of law and the necessity of order, and he looked upon the papacy as the embodiment of these two ideas in the ecclesiastical sphere.

Moral leadership and orderly government were indeed the two great necessities of Europe in the eleventh century. The papacy came forward and claimed to satisfy them, and all that was best in Europe put itself under its guidance. But they were precisely the two qualities in which the Church of England was most deficient. Of moral leadership there was hardly any. The best of her bishops and abbots, like Ealdred, archbishop of York, and Lyfing, bishop of Worcester, were patriotic sensible men, who were content to accept the moral standard around them and never dreamed it to be their duty to make it better. In matters of government things were almost worse. The Church had become so much merged in the State under a number of religious kings and ecclesiastical ministers, that her right to legislate and judge for herself had almost lapsed, and she had accustomed herself to look to the king and Witan to enact and to enforce the laws which she desired. A little infusion of Norman blood, of the vigorous imagination, the chivalrous devotion, the passion for order and method which distinguished that gifted race would have done no harm to lethargic England. No one would have complained if Eadward had endowed his country with a Herlwin, a Lanfranc, or an Anselm.

Deficiencies of the English Church.

The men whom he brought over were of a very different stamp. On the death of Ælfweard, bishop of London, in 1044, the see was given to Robert, a monk of Jumièges, who became the chief favourite and adviser of the king in ecclesiastical matters. Five years later Ulf, a Norman, was made bishop of Dorchester, and in 1051 Robert of Jumièges was raised to the archbishopric of Canterbury, and a Norman named William followed him in London. Of all these foreigners, William bishop of London seems to have been the only one who discharged his duties well,

Influence of Normans in England, 1044-1052.

while Ulf and Robert were striking instances of the contrary. Of the former it is expressly recorded that he did naught bishoplike, while the latter made it his chief business to stir up the mind of Eadward against Godwine and the national party. In this he was aided by the Norman kinsfolk of the king who were already settled in the country, like Ralph the Timid, earl of Hereford, and by Norman visitors like Eustace of Boulogne, the king's brother-in-law. A chance brawl between the insolent followers of Eustace and the citizens of Dover brought matters to a crisis. Godwine was accused of disloyalty, and banished by a packed meeting of the Witan in September 1051. For the moment the Normans were victorious. Godwine with most of his family took refuge in Flanders, Harold among the Danes of Ireland. Eadgyth the queen was sent to a monastery. Norman prelates ruled England ecclesiastically from the straits of Dover to the Humber. Norman earls and bishops predominated in the counsels of the king, and William, duke of the Normans, crossed the sea to visit his kinsman at Winchester, and to take stock of a country which seemed so quickly to be falling into the hands of his own subjects.

Their triumph was not for long. The rule of the foreigners was the one thing wanted to unite all England against them. In the September of the next year Godwine and Harold at the head of a large fleet sailed up the Thames to London, where Eadward was staying. It was a triumphal procession. So unanimous was the feeling in their favour that the Normans did not even attempt to make head against them. From all parts of England they fled to the sea-coast for their lives, and got them quickly over sea. Robert of Jumièges the archbishop, and Ulf the unbishoplike prelate of Dorchester, had to cut their way, sword in hand, through the streets of London. While the outlawry of the earls was being reversed in the gemòt of London amidst the shouts of an enthusiastic nation, the last Norman back was speeding in terror across the sea. Never since the days of Cæsar was triumph more sudden and more complete.

Final triumph of Godwine, 1052.

Eadward accepted the inevitable with good grace. For the rest of his reign he left political affairs almost entirely in the hands of Godwine and Harold, and devoted his personal attention to the foundation of the great monastery and church of S. Peter at Westminster, within the precincts of which his bones still lie. Godwine survived his triumph but a few months. After the Easter gemòt of 1053, he was carried to his last resting-place in the old minster at Winchester, and Harold became the virtual sovereign of England. More cultured than his father, wider in sympathy, and less hard in character, Harold was deficient in the cautious wisdom which was the special characteristic of Godwine. He had served no apprenticeship in the art of ruling. Power came to him, he had not to win it. His knowledge of mankind was much less profound. His methods of policy, if more frank, were apt to be much more dangerous. He would despise danger and override it rather than avoid it. Brave, chivalrous, and noble-spirited, he was beloved by his own men, and respected and obeyed by all true Englishmen; but though they admired his character they never trusted his prudence nor followed his leadership with the same implicit faith which they had extended to his wiser father.

Character of Harold.

In ecclesiastical matters he was out of sympathy with the predominant thought of his time. Though by no means irreligious, in his religious policy he was national even to the verge of being insular. When the best thought and noblest devotion of Christendom was embracing the monastic ideal, when Herlwin and Lanfranc, and Anselm and Wulfstan were monks, Harold ostentatiously set his face against monasticism, and in his own beloved foundation of Holy Cross at Waltham deliberately preferred a secular constitution.[1] When all that was truest in Christian thought was eager for increased

[1] Clergy who lived together in community under vows in obedience to a definite religious rule like monks, friars, and some canons were called 'regulars.' All other clergy in distinction to them were called 'secular,' even when, like most canons, they obeyed a common rule of life and had a common table and often a common dormitory.

discipline in the Church, for the more rigid enforcement of Church law, for the more scrupulous observance of Church order, Harold lent himself to the violation of canon and the breach of discipline by which Stigand became archbishop of Canterbury. When Robert of Jumièges cut his way with his sword through the streets of London, and escaped for his life to his native Normandy, he left his archbishopric deserted, indeed, but not vacant. He neither resigned his office, nor was he deposed from it by any authority national or papal. According to his own view he was simply expelled by force by Godwine and his party, in manifest derogation of the rights of the Church, without even any attempt of legal justification, and he quickly made the tale of his wrongs and the wrongs of his see resound throughout Europe, and prejudice the English leaders at the papal court. Never was a time when it behoved Englishmen to walk more warily. Godwine and Harold could little afford to put a weapon wantonly into their enemies' hand. Yet they suffered the Witan of London to treat the primacy as vacant by the simple outlawry of its possessor, and allowed Stigand, as a reward for his efforts in promoting the reconciliation between them and the king, to add the archbishopric of Canterbury to the bishopric of Winchester, which he already held.

His patronage of Stigand.

The results were quickly seen. Men felt that it was impossible to recognise Stigand as *de jure* archbishop as long as Robert was alive and not canonically deposed. They would not accept ministrations at the hands of one in so doubtful a position. Bishops went to Ealdred of York, or across the water, for their consecration. Even Harold himself, his friend and abettor, would not suffer him to hallow his church at Waltham, or to crown him king. He was an archbishop who performed no archiepiscopal functions. For six years he could not procure a pall, and had to use the one left behind by Robert in the hurry of his flight. When he did procure one for himself it was from a pope who never succeeded in establishing his authority over the Church, and has been in consequence considered as an anti-pope or usurper. Thus Stigand and his friends of the national

party became looked upon not merely as the enemies of the Normans but as the supporters of schismatics, the abettors of ecclesiastical lawlessness, and the foes of the monastic system. To rescue England from their grasp was pictured as a work worthy of a Christian prince and certain of the blessing of God.

His oath to William, 1064.

The unfortunate chance which cast Harold on the French coast and put him in William's power in 1064, and led to the fatal oath in which he publicly swore to support the claim of William to the English throne, intensified the feeling with which he was already regarded. It enabled William to denounce Harold personally to Europe as a perjurer and traitor, instead of merely holding him up to reprobation politically as the supporter of schismatics and the enemy of the Church. It ensured the enlistment of the moral sense of the civilised world against England and her king. Men could not stop to inquire into arguments and justifications. They were content with the broad, incontrovertible fact—Harold had sworn, Harold had broken his oath. That was enough for plain men. Harold and England were in the wrong, William and the papacy were in the right. So they persuaded themselves. But had not Harold and his party already run counter to the moral feelings and sympathies of Europe in Church affairs, had not they mixed themselves up with uncanonical archbishops and schismatical popes, the papacy would not have been so forward to denounce the usurper and the perjurer, Europe would not have been so willing to accept the Norman story without question, and William himself would have found it far less easy effectively to present his expedition of aggrandisement to Europe as a holy war.

Government of Harold, 1057-1066.

As the death of Eadward the Confessor drew near, the dramatic interest of the great crisis increased. All England knew that William of Normandy would assuredly demand the crown. All that was best and most patriotic in England gathered round Harold as the one man capable of preserving the country from the foreigners. Men looked on at the preparations for the struggle with bated breath. They rejoiced at the victories of Harold over Gruffyd of north

Wales, and hailed him as one fit to command. They applauded his good rule in England, and recognised him as worthy of the crown. They mourned when they heard the story of his shipwreck at Ponthieu, and the subsequent oath of fealty to William. They hoped that his marriage with the daughter of Ælfgar of Mercia would secure the great Mercian earldom to his side. They trembled when it was told them how Tostig, his brother, had turned traitor and had leagued himself with Norway. It needed all their courage and all their steadfastness to keep heart when foes were threatening from Norway and from Normandy alike, and the head of western Christendom gave the solemn blessing of the Church to the invader.

At last the blow fell. At the Christmas festival of 1065 Eadward wore his crown in public for the last time. On Holy Innocents' day, when the church of his new abbey was consecrated, he was ill. Before the festival was over he was dead, having bequeathed the crown to Harold with his dying breath. In September 1066 Tostig and Harold Hardrada landed in the north, and on the 25th of that month the Norwegian king earned his seven feet of earth at the hands of Harold and his house-carls at Stamford Bridge. But the invasion of the north had left the way open to the more dangerous foe in the south. Harold hurried back from his victory at Stamford Bridge only to find William encamped securely on English soil. On the hill of Senlac, near Hastings, the battle decisive for the future of England was fought. Norman craft, Norman hardiness, and Norman archery prevailed over English steadfastness. With the death of Harold and his brothers round the standard of Wessex on the place of Battle, old English simplicity, old English isolation, old English exclusiveness passed away, and England took her place, for good or for ill, under Norman leadership among the nations of western Europe.

Death of Eadward, 1066.

Battle of Senlac.

The battle of Senlac was fatal to the English cause because the death of Harold left England leaderless. There was no one to take his place in counsel or in camp. At the crisis of her fate

England could not produce a man capable of rallying round him the defeated but unconquered elements of English patriotism.

Conquest of England, 1066-1070.

In the west, in the north, in the fen-land, the Conqueror met, indeed, with stubborn resistance, but it was local not national in its character. After the victory of Senlac and the occupation of London, William was truly and unquestionably king of the English—not because he had been elected by a terrified Witan, though that gave him technical title, not because he had been crowned in proper form, though that gave him ecclesiastical sanction, but because there was no one in broad England who could with impunity disobey his will or question his right.

By the year 1070 William was the undisputed lord of the whole land, and able to turn his attention to the government of the country. According to the theory which he himself maintained, he was the lawful successor by grant, by inheritance, and by election, of Eadward the Confessor. His expedition into England was not the conquest of a foreign power, but the successful assertion of a lawful claim by a national heir. Harold was a usurper, and the men who fought with him at Senlac traitors against their true sovereign. Such a theory, when brought to the test of actual fact, was ludicrous enough. Never was claimant to a crown less of a national candidate, more obviously a foreign conqueror, than William the Norman. He was foreign by birth, foreign in speech, foreign in thought and habit. One Englishman only was found in his camp, not even a traitor fought by his side. But although William himself was in truth a foreigner, and won his crown by conquest, the very fact that he claimed to reign as a national king, though in itself a fiction, made his government in all essentials an English government. The foreign conquest assumed the shape of a dynastic revolution. To the outward eye all went on as before. There was no sweeping away of English institutions. English law still prevailed. The English Church still maintained its authority. The English Witan still met. The direct and immediate change was not one of institutions

Constitutional position of William.

but of persons. A new race of men came into England and took charge of the government—a race different in character, different in tradition, different in training from the Englishmen whom they superseded. They succeeded to the management of the old English institutions. They became the owners of most of the land, the holders of all important posts in the government. In the Church all bishoprics and most abbacies fell to their share. Englishmen lost the control over the affairs of England. That control fell into the hands of the conquering race, and was exercised in accordance with their own traditions. English institutions lived on unharmed, but were governed by Norman minds and received the impress of the Norman character. Thus were they fitted to become the true expression of the political life of the new nationality which was in a few years to spring from the union of the two races. Thirty years had not elapsed from the Conquest before a Norman king owed his English throne to English hands. A hundred years had not passed before all distinction between Norman and Englishman had disappeared. Nevertheless the changes brought about, if not introduced, by the Conquest were considerable enough. The substitution of Norman barons and knights, brought up in feudal ways of thinking, for English earls and thegns as the owners of the land and the advisers of the crown, was sufficiently important. It made the feudal tie between lord and vassal, which had hitherto had but small hold in England, the most important principle of English law and social economy. It introduced the feudal tenure of knight service as the ordinary mode of holding land. It filled England with castles, impregnable to the artillery of those days, which as easily served the turn of the brigand and the rebel as of the sheriff or the king. In a word, if the Conquest did not introduce feudalism into England, it made feudal ideas the leading ideas in social and political life, feudal law the basis of English law, and the spirit of feudal independence the most serious of national dangers.

The change one of persons, not institutions.

In the Church the changes effected in consequence of the

Conquest were more obvious than those which affected the State. William, it will be remembered, had received a special mandate from the pope to bring the stubborn and independent island into subjection. But behind the political ambition of Rome there lay, as has been so often the case, a real moral sense of duty. The English Church had fallen behindhand in the spiritual race. Its lips were as yet untouched by the coal of fire which was enflaming the zeal of the west. It was still disorganised, laxly governed, ill-disciplined. Monasticism had made but little way, in spite of the efforts of Æthelwold and Eadward and the example of S. Wulfstan. Married canons and married priests set openly at defiance the call to a stricter and more ascetic life among the clergy, which was sounding and resounding throughout Europe. Hildebrand, the great reformer of the Church and the practical founder of the mediæval papacy, was already marshalling his forces for the great struggle of righteousness and discipline against wrong and laxity, of ecclesiastical against temporal ambition. He wished to become master of the island realm which preserved so stolid an independence. He wished to enlist the power of England on his side in the approaching contest. But he also wished to stir the dry bones of English churchmanship, to root out abuses, effect reforms, and make the Church of England more worthy of her high mission. In this William was willing enough to help. Directly he was firmly settled on the throne, in 1070, he began to deal with ecclesiastical matters. In April Stigand was canonically deposed from the primacy by Ermenfrid, the legate of the pope. The vacancy thus created was speedily filled by Lanfranc, and from that time the ecclesiastical policy of William must be looked upon as mainly due to the archbishop.

Reform of the Church.

In choosing Lanfranc for the see of Canterbury, William was giving to his new conquest a distinction of which it was very much in need. Lanfranc was among the first of European scholars, the best known of living theologians, the most famous of Norman monks. Born and

Policy of Lanfranc, 1070-1089.

educated at Pavia, he had brought his learning and his ambition across the Alps to the remote valleys of Normandy in the days when the Normans were beginning to claim for themselves the leadership of Europe. Once there, he fell under the spell of Norman religion. Herlwin and the wooden hermitage at Bec seemed to offer him a life and a work more real and true than that pursued in the schools of philosophy and at the courts of princes. The great scholar of Normandy was suddenly lost to the world under the garb of a humble monk. But the secret could not long be kept. The monastery of Bec was soon besieged by a crowd of earnest inquirers anxious to give themselves up to the service of God and the teaching of Lanfranc. Under his sagacious management as prior, and afterwards as abbot, Bec became the most distinguished of Norman monasteries and the most famous of Norman schools. To Bec and Lanfranc the pope turned when in need of a champion to defend the newly-formulated doctrine of transubstantiation against Berengar of Tours. Soon afterwards, a poor joke and a well-managed negotiation combined to bring him into intimate personal relations with William, duke of Normandy. From that moment he was called upon to take an active part in ecclesiastical politics. He became the close friend and trusted adviser of the duke. To the learning of the theologian and the devotion of the monk he now added the prescience of the statesman. To him is largely due the good discipline introduced into the Church of Normandy under duke William. Hildebrand, now in authority at Rome, though not yet pope, quickly recognised his worth. To his influence and tact William chiefly owed the settlement of a difficulty which had arisen about his marriage, and the support of the Holy See to his expedition. Nor was he ungrateful. From the first he designated Lanfranc for the highest ecclesiastical office which was his to bestow, and no sooner was the deposition of Stigand canonically effected, than all the world knew that the Church of England had gained as her head the greatest living ecclesiastic north of the Alps.

The policy of Lanfranc was founded on two great principles

which were closely connected in his mind—the reform of the outward organisation, and the improvement of spiritual life.

Appointment of Normans.

To effect both of these objects, the first thing to be done was to place all the leading offices of the Church in hands which could be trusted. No single Englishman was appointed to a bishopric, and very few to abbacies during his primacy, or indeed for some time afterwards. Meanwhile Norman priests, and especially Norman monks of high character and approved loyalty, filled the chief posts. Remigius, a monk of Fécamp, had already succeeded Wulfwig at Dorchester. Thomas, the treasurer of Bayeux, received the archbishopric of York. Walkelin, a royal chaplain, was appointed to Winchester, Herfast, another royal chaplain, to Elmham, and a Norman, named Stigand, to Chichester. Other Normans were set to preside over the important abbeys of Peterborough and S. Augustine's, Canterbury. By the combined effects of deprivations and death, there was not a single Englishman in possession of an English see, except S. Wulfstan at Worcester, when the Conqueror was carried to his grave.

No sooner had the Norman prelates been consecrated to their dioceses than they eagerly began the work of diocesan organisation.

Alteration of sees, 1075-1088.

In dioceses where the 'bishop's stool' had been placed in villages or remote towns, it was removed to large centres of population and fortified cities. The bishop was to be in future not merely a conferrer of orders, but a leader of men, the centre and director of the activity of his see, and the friend and ally of the baron who extended his protection to him from the neighbouring castle. Directly the Normans settled in their new seats, their passion for building asserted itself. The barons began to build castles, the clergy to rebuild churches. Both were built in the same style, inspired by the same desire for security, each of course being adapted to the special needs of the particular building.

Building of churches.

When Lanfranc took possession of Canterbury, he found his cathedral in ashes. It had caught fire and been burned to the ground in 1067. Seven years after his consecration it once more challenged

comparison with the noblest churches in England. Built after the pattern of S. Stephen's at Caen, in the usual cruciform plan, with twin towers at the west and a central lantern at the crossing of nave and transepts, it was noticeable more for the beauty of its detail and the richness of its decoration than for its size. At Rochester, Gundulf, the builder of the Tower of London, with Lanfranc's assistance, built both cathedral and castle. At London, Maurice began the vast fabric of old St. Paul's. At Winchester, Walkelin began the transepts which we can now see much as he left them, and the mighty nave which is still to be discerned under the overlaying work of William of Wykeham. Of Hereford, of Worcester, of York, of the abbeys of Gloucester, St. Alban's, Evesham, and countless others, the same tale is told. In each case, with the incoming Normans came the passion for building, which, gathering strength as time went on, soon left not merely a cathedral or an abbey church but hardly even a parish church in England which had not been rebuilt on a larger scale in the new style.

This rebuilding of churches—especially of the cathedral and abbey churches—was not without its spiritual significance. The cathedral was to be larger and more magnificent because it was to be the pattern church of the diocese, the centre of a fuller religious life. It was to show forth to the world the perfection of worship. In the stateliness of its ceremonial, the richness of its appointments, the reverence of its order, the beauty of its music, it was to do what could be done on earth adequately to set forth the glory of God. There was no lower ideal or lower standard thought of in the Middle Ages. However large a part a love of ostentation or personal or diocesan rivalry played in urging prelates to greater feats of building than their neighbours had ever conceived, behind the personal pride, superior to the spirit of competition, was a desire to do something great for the glory of God. Even worldly and wicked men, like William of S. Carilef and Ranulf Flambard, displayed their magnificence in building churches for the service of God, not palaces for themselves like Louis XIV. or cardinal

Wolsey. Holy men like Remigius of Lincoln, Lanfranc of Canterbury, or Thomas of York, were not content with this. The material edifice was to them but a fit home for the spiritual building, and side by side with the rebuilding of the cathedral church was pressed the reform of the cathedral body. Order and discipline took the place of carelessness and laxity. At Canterbury, in the time of Stigand, the monks of Christ Church lived like laymen. They hunted and hawked and diced and drank. Under Lanfranc, raised to the number of 150, and placed under the government of a prior, they soon became model followers of the Benedictine rule. At Rochester Gundulf found four canons living with their wives and children in abject poverty. He left a flourishing Benedictine monastery of over fifty monks, who succeeded to the rights of the canons in the cathedral as each vacancy occurred. At York, when archbishop Thomas was appointed, there were but three canons left to conduct the dreary services of their half-burned church. By the time the building had been repaired from its foundations, and made once more fit for the celebration of the Holy Mysteries, the chapter at York had become the pattern of all similar foundations. A body of prebendaries, each deriving his maintenance from his allotted endowment out of the estates of the church—called his prebend—formed the chapter. They were ruled by a dean and officered by the precentor, the treasurer, and the chancellor, who were responsible for the musical, financial, and educational business of the cathedral. Each had his own work, his own income, and his own lodgings, though they were all unmarried. They met every day in the cathedral to say their offices together and to attend the chapter mass, and on stated occasions in the chapter-house to transact their common business. In all essential respects the constitution of the church of York, as reformed by archbishop Thomas, became the constitution of every capitular body in England in the Middle Ages, and has since the Reformation been the ordinary constitution of English cathedral bodies.

Reform of cathedral bodies.

Nor were the abbots of monasteries behind the bishops in the

path of reform. Serlo, the builder of the abbey church of Gloucester, was the reformer of the discipline of the abbey and the promoter of its prosperity. Of abbot Paul, the builder of S Alban's, the same is recorded. The manifest evidences of such renewed zeal for holy things among all classes of ecclesiastical persons could not but have effect upon the laity. Much of the land of which Norman barons and knights dispossessed the English thegns quickly found its way back to the English Church. New monasteries, built and endowed by the Norman land-owners, sprang up all over the country. Existing monasteries and churches received larger endowments. William himself and Matilda his wife set the example in their twin foundations at Caen in Normandy, and their joint foundation in honour of S. Martin in the place of Battle at Senlac. Earl Roger of Montgomery, the head of the great and wicked house of Belesme, founded the abbey of S. Peter at Shrewsbury. William of Warren and his wife Gundrada introduced the reformed Benedictines of Clugny in their great foundation of Lewes. Smaller men, who were not able to build or to endow, did at least what they could. Ligulf and his wife, land-owners in the neighbourhood of S. Alban's, sold their flock of sheep and goats, and with the price bought two bells which they gave to the great tower of the monastery church, and when they heard the peals ring out over the hills, and the glad music of the bells call all from far and near to the worship of God, they would say to one another in thankful jest: 'Hear the sweet bleating of our sheep and goats!'

Generosity of the laity.

Side by side with the reform of monastic and capitular discipline went that of the parochial clergy. Hildebrand looked upon the enforcement of celibacy among the clergy as one of the main levers by which to raise the standard of spiritual life, the strongest tie which was to bind the clergy to their profession. Deprived of the temptations of domestic life, emancipated from sordid family cares, the clergy were to throw their whole energies into their calling, and bind themselves to the papacy with an unswerving and undivided

Enforcement of clerical celibacy, 1076.

allegiance. The ideal proved in the end too high for human nature. In the eleventh century it was embraced with impetuous ardour. Despite of sturdy objections raised here and there, Catholic Europe as a whole became indelibly impressed with the superiority of the celibate life. These ideas had made their way into England in the time of Dunstan, but had not received much support. Lanfranc now thought that the time had come to take a further step. In a council held at Winchester in 1076 all canons were obliged to put away their wives, the unmarried clergy were forbidden to marry, and bishops expressly enjoined not to ordain married men. The parish clergy who were already married were accordingly permitted to keep their wives, but it was hoped that after a generation had passed celibacy would be the invariable rule. Experience soon showed that the question was not so easily settled. Hardly a council met in England for a century which did not find it necessary to repeat the laws against clerical marriage in all their strictness, and to denounce it as nothing better than concubinage. But even then the practice continued, and throughout the Middle Ages it was by no means uncommon for the parochial clergy to form unions which were in fact irregular marriages—that is, marriages recognised by society, and valid legally as long as no steps were taken to declare them void.

Relations between William and the papacy.

Willing as were William and Lanfranc to bring the higher ideals and superior organisation of the Roman Church to mould and discipline the Church of England, they were by no means the humble slaves of the Hildebrandine papacy. Rome was to be an example of a more disciplined life, the pattern of a better administration, the teacher of a higher morality, not the source of authoritative law, still less the dictator of action, or the supreme judge of conscience. She was to persuade opinion, not to enforce obedience. The right of the papacy to command, the duty of kings to obey, were claims to which William I. never thought of listening for a moment. He exercised without question or remonstrance a supremacy over all persons, ecclesiastical as well as civil, within his dominions, as real as any enjoyed by

Henry VIII. or Elizabeth. Gregory VII. himself never ventured to question the right of the king to invest the English bishops with staff and ring, even in the very year when he set his foot on the neck of the emperor at Canossa. He did indeed, in an unhappy moment demand through his legate Hubert that William should do homage to him and his successors, and should pay the arrears of Peter's pence which were due. He soon received an answer which effectually put a stop to such a claim. 'One demand,' writes William, 'I have allowed, the other I have not allowed. To do homage I refuse, because I never promised to do it, nor do I find that my predecessors have ever done it. The money shall be more regularly paid.' It was probably in relation to this demand, that he is said to have laid down, under the title of customs of the English Church, what is practically a strong assertion of the royal supremacy in ecclesiastical matters against the claims advanced by the pope. No pope was to be acknowledged without the consent of the crown, no bulls or letters from the pope enforced without its approval. No canons were to be promulgated without the confirmation of the king, or debated without his license. No baron or royal minister was to be subjected to ecclesiastical censure without the king's permission.

The Consuetudines.

This assertion of the rights of his crown did not disturb the friendliness of the relations between king and pope. Gregory could not fail to see that however stiffly William and his successors might act, the Norman Conquest of England must necessarily greatly increase the power of the pope over the English Church. The substitution of Normans for Englishmen, of Norman ways of thought for English ways of thought, of the Norman love of law for English laxity, all assisted the inevitable tendency. England had been rudely forced out of her insularity, and the opinions and beliefs of Europe must affect her whether she would or no. Of this William himself was soon to give a striking illustration. By a writ, issued probably towards the end of his reign, he took the cognisance of ecclesiastical cases away from

Separation of the ecclesiastical courts.

the ordinary courts of justice, and placed them wholly under the ecclesiastical courts where they were decided according to ecclesiastical law. Hitherto, English codes of law had contained both ecclesiastical and civil provisions, and the breach of both alike had been dealt with in the county court, where the bishop and the ealdorman sat together as judges. Although in theory it was well understood that ecclesiastical cases should be decided by the ecclesiastical authorities, in practice a good deal of confusion resulted, which was soon found intolerable by the Norman mind, trained under a different system, and fond of sharply cut definitions. Hitherto the Church had never claimed her independent rights because the State had never threatened them. Both had worked together for a common end. But what was possible in an insular and self-centred kingdom, was impossible in a kingdom which had become part of a European state. With the coming of the Normans the conception of a Church and a kingdom, intensely national and stubbornly independent, gave way before the conception of a united Christendom coterminous with the civilised world, under the supreme leadership of pope and emperor. The conception was a nobler one. It brought with it greater ideals. It inspired greater enthusiasm. It satisfied the desire for order. But for two centuries it made the struggle between Church and State the leading fact in English history.

CHAPTER VI

THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN CHURCH AND STATE

A.D. 1087–1176

THE changes in the religious life of England brought about by the Norman Conquest were not less important than those subsequently due to the Reformation. During the fifty years which followed the coming of William the Norman, the Church of England became cosmopolitan instead of insular, feudal instead of national, papal instead of independent. For five hundred years the connection between the Church of England and the Church of Rome had been but slight. Archbishops had received their palls from the pope. Peter's pence had been paid with commendable regularity. The more devout of English Churchmen and English kings had made their pilgrimages to Rome, since the evil days when the invasion of the infidel deprived Christendom of the possession of the tomb of her Lord at Jerusalem. But no serious attempt had been made by the popes, since the days of Wilfrid, to impose their own will, unasked, upon the English Church, or to interfere with her own management of her own business. Her bishops and archbishops were appointed by the king and the Witan. Her laws were either made by synods of bishops, and accepted and enforced by the king, or made by the king and Witan, and accepted by the bishops. They were interpreted by courts held under the joint presidency of the bishop and the ealdorman. The ecclesiastical struggles which agitated the continent hardly affected the English Church at all. She was a passive, perhaps unconscious, spectator of the terrible

Effects of the conquest upon the Church.

degradation of the papacy in the tenth century. She was unmoved by its extraordinary revival, under the influence of Hildebrand, in the eleventh century. Wrapped in her own serene isolation, she was alike unmindful of the audacious questionings of John the Scot, and the rationalistic propositions of Berengar of Tours. The parochial clergy, locally endowed by individual benefactions, with their right to tithes secured to them by law, lived happy undistinguished lives surrounded by their wives and children, subject only to the gentle rule of their bishop. The bishops and higher clergy, content with their positions of dignity and ascendancy in the nation, looked with unconcerned eyes on the turmoils and disputes across the sea.

The changes wrought by the Norman Conquest were partly instantaneous, partly of gradual growth. The Church was at once brought into immediate and direct relations with the pope. Foreign clergy, accustomed to obey the pope and to accept the doctrine of papal supremacy without question, received all the higher posts. Legates from the pope came into England to judge and to depose in his name an archbishop of Canterbury. The separation of the Church courts from the State courts involved the separation of Church law from State law, and led naturally to the formation of a system of canon law, with the pope as ultimate and supreme judge, in opposition to the system of the common law, with the king as the fountain of justice. The very claim of Hildebrand to supreme authority, followed by the king's answer asserting his own supremacy, showed plainly enough the difficulties which attended the harmonious working of Church and State. This was not all. The clergy themselves felt the sharp spur of discipline. Canons had to surrender their wives. Clerical celibacy became the rule of the future. But even this did not occasion so great a revolution as the introduction of feudal ideas into the ecclesiastical life of England. At a time when land was the chief form of property, the bulk of ecclesiastical endowments were in land. The

1. Closer connection with the papacy.

2. Growth of canon law.

3. Increased discipline of the clergy.

4. Introduction of feudal ideas.

revenues of sees and religious houses were derived from land, and bishops and abbots became large land-owners in right of their sees and abbacies. Many of the parish clergy became small land-owners through the gifts of benefactors to their churches. On these ecclesiastical lands lived a large labouring population in various degrees of prosperity. As feudal ideas spread under Norman influence, the doctrines that every man must have a lord to whom he owes fealty, and that all land must be held of a lord to whom must be paid suit and service, were applied to ecclesiastics and ecclesiastical lands, just as much as to laymen and to lay lands. Bishops knelt before William I. and swore fealty to him, and received from him investiture with the symbols of their office, the ring and the pastoral staff, before they could enjoy the revenues of their sees. The miller and the ploughman became the tenants of the bishop or the abbot, just as their brethren became the tenants of the earl or the knight. Hand in hand with feudal privileges went feudal burdens. Bishops were looked upon by the feudal lawyer as in a similar position to the tenants-in-chief of the king. Their lands had to provide the due quota of men-at-arms, properly furnished and equipped, to swell the royal forces when the king went to war. They had to pay a sum of money to the king as a relief on being invested with their temporalities—a proceeding which looked like simony in the best of times, and was nothing but rank simony in the worst of times. On their deaths, their lands—as they could in the nature of things have no heirs—reverted to the king as supreme land-owner, until such time as the king himself thought fit to give the see another occupant, and the lands of the see a tenant. During the vacancy the king's officers administered the estates and received the revenues for the benefit of the see, if the king like William I. was conscientious; for the benefit of the crown, if, like William II., he was unprincipled and extortionate.

To Ranulf Flambard, the financial minister of William II., and the builder of the stately nave of Durham cathedral, attaches the infamy of having applied the logic of feudal law to ecclesiastical benefices so ruthlessly as to ruin the Church for the

pecuniary benefit of the king. William I. had exercised authority over the Church unhesitatingly, and Lanfranc and even Hildebrand had not remonstrated, for they knew that it was exercised under a deep sense of responsibility. William II. and Flambard threw all idea of responsibility to the winds. They repudiated the idea that the authority of the crown over the Church was a trusteeship for the purpose of securing to the nation the higher interests of religion and morality. They cared nothing for the rights of conscience. They thought only of the rights of property. Bishoprics were sold to the highest bidder, or were kept vacant in order that the king might seize the revenues, raise the rents, and in some cases even sell the lands for his own advantage. After the death of Lanfranc in 1089, the see of Canterbury was kept vacant for four years while the royal officers plundered the tenants.

Policy of Ranulf Flambard and William II.

Probably it would have remained vacant much longer had not the wicked king fallen seriously ill in 1093, and trembled for his miserable soul at the approach of death. In hot haste he sent for Anselm, the abbot of Bec, and thrust into his unwilling hands the ring and pastoral staff of Canterbury, lest the angel of death should surprise him before he had made reparation for his sin. 'Ah, my brothers,' said Anselm mournfully to the surrounding crowd, 'what have ye done; ye have yoked together a wild untameable bull and an old and feeble sheep.' And so it proved. The Red King arose from his bed of sickness with a sense of having been tricked. 'By the Holy Face of Lucca,' he swore blasphemously, 'God shall never have me good for all the ill that He has brought upon me.' He kept his word. The archbishop naturally met with the worst of his spite, for he was the living memorial of his weakness. William was determined to quarrel with him. He pursued him with vexatious suits in his court. He rejected as insufficient the contribution which the archbishop sent towards the war in Normandy in 1093. He

Anselm appointed archbishop of Canterbury, 1093.

Persecution of Anselm, 1093-1095.

refused to acknowledge him as his adviser in ecclesiastical matters, and cast about for a pretext for getting rid of him. One lay ready to his hand. It was necessary that Anselm should procure his pall from the pope. But it so happened that there were at that time two candidates for the papal chair—Urban and Clement—who were disputing between themselves for the allegiance of western Christendom. England had not yet declared in favour of either, and by the customs of the realm, so lately enunciated by William I., the right of deciding between rival candidates for the papacy was acknowledged to be a special prerogative of the crown. Normandy, however, had already accepted Urban, and Anselm as abbot of Bec had pledged himself to him, and could not forswear a personal allegiance merely because he had changed his place of residence.

William saw his opportunity. Directly Anselm asked leave to go to Rome to obtain his pall from Urban, the king accused him of high treason in desiring to deprive him of the right of his crown to choose between the rival popes, and summoned a council at Rockingham, in Northamptonshire, to punish him. The council met in Lent 1095, but William soon found that he had gone too far. The bishops, partly in fear for their own safety, partly through ignoble jealousy of their saintly chief, were ready to condemn their archbishop off-hand, and even to outlaw him at the king's command. The common people, on the contrary, were unanimous in his favour, and the lay barons refused to support so high-handed a policy. 'He is our archbishop,' they said to the king. 'He has to govern Christian religion in this land; and in this respect we, who are Christians, cannot refuse his guidance while we live here, especially as no spot of offence attaches to him to make you act differently as regards him.' Already both barons and commons were beginning dimly to see that the Church was the only champion strong enough to maintain feudal justice and national liberty against the all-mastering power of the crown. The Red King had to temporise. An embassy was sent to Rome, and eventually William agreed to recognise Urban as

Council of Rockingham, 1095.

Temporary reconciliation, 1095.

pope and reconcile himself to the archbishop. At Whitsuntide 1095, the two met at Windsor. A month later Anselm assumed the archiepiscopal pall at his cathedral church at Canterbury, and peace once more reigned in the Church of England.

The truce was not for long. William had attacked Anselm on a question of religious duty in which the pope had an interest, and had failed. He now determined to try the safer ground of feudal duty where he alone was judge. In 1097 he made a military expedition into Wales, and called upon Anselm to furnish his contingent of soldiers. The archbishop obeyed. Directly the troops joined the royal standard, the Red King burst into a fit of real or assumed anger. Never were soldiers so miserably equipped, and so manifestly unfit for the service they were called upon to do. The archbishop was guilty of a gross breach of feudal duty, and should answer for it in the king's court. Anselm looked upon this new outrage as proof of the determination of the king to ruin him. It was no use trying any longer to live peaceably together. The untameable bull was bent upon worrying the feeble sheep to death. William had made God his enemy, and the Church of God his prey. Injustice, tyranny, moral corruption lorded it over the land at the bidding of a blasphemous king and a grasping minister. Hireling bishops acquiesced in the scandal. The remonstrance of the archbishop was unheeded, his attempts at reform flouted, he himself persecuted, and the flock committed to his charge cruelly oppressed.

Renewed persecution of Anselm, 1097.

But it was to deal with cases such as this, to reduce the license of brute force under the discipline of moral authority, to control the wickedness of kings with the lash of spiritual censure, that Hildebrand had reorganised the papacy, and claimed for it supreme lordship over the world. Not a quarter of a century had elapsed since the heir of Augustus had knelt amid the snows of Canossa in abject humiliation before the representative of S. Peter. In Rome and in Rome alone in that turbulent age was to be found the combination of moral force and practical power sufficient to cope with

Appeal of Anselm to the pope, 1097.

monarchs of the stamp of Rufus. In the days of Anselm the papacy was the embodiment of moral and religious authority. Its throne was based on higher sanctions than the thrones of the earth. It existed to enforce the law of righteousness, to proclaim the supreme importance of religious conduct, to insist upon the necessity of moral responsibility. After ages might come to know that its justice was venal, its religion too often but formal obedience, its morality the slave and plaything of worldly ambition. Future generations might come to recognise that the national law of a civilised state was, with all its imperfections, a surer guarantee of justice than the elaborate code of a foreign power which was always open to political and often to pecuniary bribes. In the days of Anselm it was not so. Probably, amid all the governments of Europe, the papacy at that time was the most pure. Certainly it was purity itself when compared to the court of Rufus. So in the days of his distress, threatened by the king, deserted by the bishops, Anselm turned for support in weariness of heart to the rock of Peter. He asked leave to go to Rome and take counsel of the pope. At once national feeling was aroused. King, bishops, and barons were united in urging him to withdraw his request. He remained steadily persistent. At last the king, perhaps secretly pleased at getting rid of him without violence, gave a grudging assent. In November 1097 Anselm left the shores of England, pursued to the last by the petty insults of the king—in name a pilgrim, in reality an exile.

Exile of Anselm, 1097 1100.

For three years Anselm remained abroad. He was received by pope Urban with extreme deference, lodged at the Lateran palace, and consulted on various matters of ecclesiastical policy. In April 1099 he attended a council at the Lateran, in which he was placed in the post of honour next the pope, and heard the excommunication of the Church pronounced against all prelates who accepted investiture from a layman. But in spite of this Urban took good care not to give a formal decision in his favour. He was not prepared to run the risk of losing the allegiance of England.

Sick at heart at the delay, Anselm left Italy for France after Easter 1099. There in the summer of the year 1100 he heard the news of the Red King's death and received a summons from Henry I. to return. On September 23 he once more set foot in England amid the welcome of the whole nation. Indeed, for the moment it seemed as if a new era was dawning for England, and all difficulties were cleared away. The first act of the new king on ascending the throne was to issue a charter of liberties, in which he promised to grant freedom to the Holy Church of God, and renounced all claims to sell, lease, or make profit out of ecclesiastical lands during a vacancy in bishopric or abbacy. The first act of the returned archbishop was to free Henry's chosen bride Edith, the great-granddaughter of Eadmund Ironsides, from all obligation to a conventual life, and to hallow a marriage which united the houses of Rolf and of Cerdic. No one did more than Anselm to secure the throne of Henry from the attacks of his brother Robert in 1101. No one was more forward than the king to assist Anselm in holding a council at Westminster in 1102 to promote the ecclesiastical reforms which he had so much at heart. At that celebrated meeting the final step was taken in the enforcement of clerical celibacy, and the rules of the English Church assimilated to those of Rome. All married priests were to put away their wives, and all clergy in the future make a profession of chastity on being ordained sub-deacon. From that time until the reign of Edward VI. clerical marriages were contrary to ecclesiastical law, though they were common enough in fact, and often connived at by authority.

Recall of Anselm by Henry I., 1100.

The council of Westminster, 1102.

This seeming harmony was only on the outside. Henry, though more politic and less impetuous than his brother, was not one whit less masterful. Anselm, though anxious for peace, was as tenacious as ever of the rights of his own individual conscience. Unluckily, in the question of lay investitures which was at that time agitating western Europe, was found abundant material for friction between two such characters.

Question of lay investitures.

The court of Rome since the days of Hildebrand had been straining every nerve to abolish the custom by which a newly appointed bishop did feudal homage to his temporal lord, and received from him the episcopal ring and the pastoral staff as the symbols of his spiritual authority. Such a ceremony seemed to imply too great dependence of the ecclesiastical on the civil power. It might easily be twisted by ingenious lawyers into an admission that bishops derived their spiritual authority from the king and not from the Church. It rendered more difficult the absolute concentration of the clergy under the pope, like an army under its commander-in-chief, which Hildebrand especially desired to effect. Partly in the general interests of the Church, partly in the selfish interests of the papacy, the popes entered into a fierce struggle with the sovereigns of Europe to destroy lay investiture. Councils were held and canons passed forbidding the clergy from receiving the ring and pastoral staff from a layman, and excommunicating the disobedient. The struggle had raged on the continent for many years before it affected England at all. Lay investiture had always been the custom in England. It had never been abused, and no one had troubled his head about it. Lanfranc and Anselm himself had accepted it as a matter of course. But when Anselm was in exile he had been brought into the thick of the fight. He had taken part in the council of the Lateran where lay investiture was denounced. For him personally, therefore, the matter was concluded. He could no longer be a party to an infraction of the law of the Church, however plausible the reasons. How could he conscientiously do that which his own voice had denounced, and incur penalties which he himself had taken part in inflicting?

Accordingly, when Henry demanded on his return that he should do homage for the restitution of his temporalities, he refused. No arguments could prevail upon him to consecrate bishops who had received investiture from the king. On the other hand, Henry was determined not to forgo an ancient custom and privilege of his crown simply in deference to the

conscientious scruples of the archbishop. The result was a deadlock, but no quarrel. During the years 1102 and 1103 embassies went to and fro between England and Rome, but the pope remained as firm as Anselm and would not make any exception in favour of Henry. 'Know all men present,' exclaimed Warelwast, bishop of Exeter, the king's envoy, 'that not to save his kingdom will king Henry lose the investiture of the churches.' 'Nor before God,' replied the pope, crimsoning with indignation, 'to save his head will pope Paschal let him have them.' On the failure of the negotiations, Anselm, who had made a special visit to Rome at the king's request, received an intimation that he had better not return to England unless he was prepared to submit. For a second time he found himself in exile for conscience sake, and the revenues of his see confiscated to the king's use. But Henry was no Rufus to quarrel wantonly with the Church for the sake of a paltry revenue or a satisfied revenge. His negotiations with the pope had showed him something of the strength of the feeling against lay investiture abroad. Even in England two of the clerks of his own chapel, whom he had nominated to vacant sees, repudiated investiture at his hands. With the instinct of a statesman he felt that he was on the losing side. He dared not face a sentence of excommunication, and in 1105 he saw that it was time to yield. In 1106 Anselm was recalled and his revenues restored, and in the August of the next year a final settlement of the difficulty was arrived at. Henry gave up his claim to invest with the ring and the staff, the symbols of spiritual authority, but retained the oath of homage to himself which was the acknowledgment of feudal allegiance. The archbishop did not survive his triumph long. On Wednesday in Holy Week 1109 his pure and much tried soul passed to its rest.

Difference between Henry and Anselm, 1103.

Settlement of the investiture difficulty, 1107.

His work remained behind him. The first great struggle between Church and State in England since the days of Wilfrid had ended in the victory of the Church, largely because the champion of the Church was Anselm. It was a victory of

character over law, of moral ascendancy over material force. Both William and Henry had the letter of the law on their side. On that of Anselm were the rights of conscience. Both William and Henry had the power of the nation behind them to enforce their will. With Anselm there was but the strength of the martyr's weakness. It is true that the archbishop could not have maintained the struggle at all had he not had the power of Rome at his back. Yet the pope dared give him little open support, and the adherence of the barons and the clergy in England to his side did far more to influence the royal policy than all the remonstrances of Rome. Englishmen quickly saw that the struggle between Anselm and Rufus was but part of the eternal struggle between right and wrong. They realised gradually that the question between Anselm and Henry was part of the far wider question of a united Christendom or an insular Church. They felt dimly that bound up with the resistance of the archbishop was the sacred cause of their own liberty. Anselm was fighting for the liberties of England no less than for his own conscience or the claims of the pope. The Church was the one power in England not yet reduced under the iron heel of the Norman kings. The clergy were the one body which still dared to dispute their will. To them fell the noble task of handing on the torch of liberty amid the gloom of a tyrannical age. The all-mastering despotism of the crown was the special danger to England in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. It was the Church which in that time of crisis rescued England from slavery. Had there been no Anselm Henry I. would have issued no charter of liberties. Had there been no Becket, Stephen Langton would have failed to inspire the barons to wrest the Great Charter from the reluctant hands of John.

Nature of Anselm's victory.

For fifty years after the death of Anselm the current of ecclesiastical life in England flowed peaceably enough. The English Church enlarged her boundaries by giving an English bishop to the diocese of Llandaff in 1107, and to that of S. David's in 1115, and by the foundation of the see of Carlisle in 1133. She improved her

Extension of the English Church.

organisation by the division of the huge diocese of Lincoln through the establishment of the see of Ely in 1109. But though bishopries were increased in number, the character of the bishops was not improved. The worst side of the now dominant influence of feudalism was seen in the increased tendency of kings to use bishopries simply as the reward of administrative service.

Deterioration of the episcopate.

William I. appointed to bishopries the best men whom he could find. William II. appointed those who gave him most money, Henry I. and Henry II. those who had been most useful to them in the government offices. Such men often proved good administrators and magnificent builders. They could not in the nature of things become religious leaders. Religion, banished from the higher ranks of the clergy, was driven more and more to find a humbler home apart from the world in monastery and hermitage. All over England sprang up religious houses where devotion and learning found rest and protection in a rude and brutal age. For a century and a half after the Conquest all the best men in the English Church came from the monasteries. Hardly a movement in favour of a stricter life manifested itself within the pale of the western Church, but it soon found a representative in English monasticism. In this men recognised one of the advantages of the closer connection with Church life abroad.

The reverse of the medal was seen when, in 1125, John of Crema claimed to take precedence of the archbishop of Canterbury and all the bishops of his province, by virtue of his appointment as legate by the pope, although he was only in priest's orders. The archbishop, William of Corbeil, weakly yielded, and then to save further indignity went to Rome and procured the appointment of legate for himself. By the appointment of John of Crema in 1125, and afterwards of Henry of Winchester in 1139, to govern the Church of England by virtue of their office of legate, the popes were in fact making a claim that all metropolitical if not episcopal power was derived from them, and was exercised by delegation from them. Such a claim was no more likely to be admitted by the Church of

The papal legation, 1125.

England in the twelfth century than by the Church of Spain at the council of Trent, but neither side wished to push matters to an extremity. A solution of the difficulty was found which did not involve any decision on the constitutional point. After the time of Stephen Langton the archbishop of Canterbury for the time being always received a commission from the pope to act as his ordinary legate, and the papal lawyers were left as free to argue that he exercised his metropolitical functions in virtue of his office of legate, as were the English lawyers that he exercised them in virtue of his archbishopric. The whole controversy aptly illustrates the extreme difficulty of harmonising the rights of a national Church with the ever-increasing claims of the mediæval papacy.

Before the end of the century the struggle between the Church and the crown broke out again in an aggravated form. Henry II. came to the throne with the fixed determination to reduce all the turbulent and independent elements of English national life firmly under the power of the king. The remedy for the anarchy which had marked the reign of Stephen was to be found in the establishment of a strong government directed by the king and administered by his servants. Royal justice was to reign supreme over local justice, royal servants were to oust the feudal nobility from all important administrative posts, the officers of the royal exchequer to collect and disburse the revenue of the country. Feudal and clerical privileges alike must bow their heads before the imperious march of the royal law. The result was not necessarily a tyranny, for a tyranny implies something of injustice in its principles, and of caprice in its administration, and never was any ruler more determinedly the champion of justice and the advocate of system than was Henry II. Indeed, an elaborate judicial organisation was, from one point of view, the deathblow to tyranny; for history proves that in the end there is no more powerful check upon the will of a king than the customs, traditions, and precedents which gather insensibly round an organised legal system. Kings may come and go, dynasties rise and fall, but the law like the Church

Policy of Henry II., 1154-1189.

lives on for ever, and is stronger than the king. But the growth of precedent, the strengthening of tradition, is necessarily a work of time. Law which in England has grown to be the nurse of freedom might easily in the twelfth century have sunk into the slave of despotism. From the time of the Conquest to the time of Simon de Montfort England was threatened with two great dangers—the uncontrolled will of unjust, wicked kings like William II. and John, and the grinding administrative despotism of the government, such as did in part result from the legal reforms of Henry II. From both these dangers she was saved by the Church. Under Anselm and Stephen Langton she upheld the banner of righteousness and liberty against wickedness and oppression. In her own law, codified earlier in the century under Ivo of Chartres and Gratian, she opposed to the king's law a system which claimed a higher sanction, professed a nobler aim, was based upon principles not less scientific, and was already invested with the halo of tradition. By her use of the principle of representation in her councils she was lighting the path of England to Parliamentary liberty as she had in former times guided it to national unity.

Importance of the liberty of the Church.

While contemplating services so many and so great, it seems at first sight disappointing to find that the notable struggle between Church and State towards the close of the century, which gave to the English Church the most celebrated of her martyrs if not the truest of her saints, should have arisen upon a question of clerical privilege. It is easy to paint Becket simply as a blind and fanatical upholder of harmful scandals in the fancied interests of a priestly caste. For such a purpose it is only necessary to look at the events of the twelfth through the eyes of the nineteenth century, and to forget that in days when justice administered in the king's court was only another name for the king's will, when equality before the law meant suppression under the crown, immunity was often the only possible form of liberty. Freedom decked herself with the plumes of privilege to hide her true character from the searching eyes of despotic power. This truth

Character of the policy of Becket, 1162-1170.

must be prominent in our minds if we would understand the real nature of the contest, and appreciate the real greatness of Becket. It was plain enough to his contemporaries. The men who took the lead in opposing him were the king's officials, the men who lived and profited by the supremacy of the government. The men who supported him most faithfully, loved him most truly, mourned for him with sincerity, and canonised him in honest affection, were the people of England, the humble commons of the realm, who cared not one jot for the immunity of a clerical offender, but let their hearts go out in willing admiration for a champion who dared to say to the despot in the plenitude of his power: 'Thus far shalt thou go and no further.'

Determination of Becket to resist a royal dictatorship.

The events of Becket's life, after he became archbishop, show that what was uppermost in his mind was a sense, almost fanatical, of the necessity of resisting royal encroachment, not simply a blind determination to maintain the privileges of his order. Trained in the household of archbishop Theobald, for seven years the friend, adviser, and chief official of the king, Becket, when raised to the see of Canterbury in 1162, had had every opportunity of knowing what the real character of the royal government was like. As a student at Bologna he had made himself familiar with the principles of the civil and the canon law. As chancellor he was brought into contact with the practical working of the common law. He frequently dispensed justice in the name of the king. It was his business to administer vacant sees and abbacies for the king's profit. He was paid for his services by a number of important and valuable ecclesiastical offices, although he was but in deacon's orders, and had no intention at that time of devoting himself to a clerical vocation. Indeed, his duty to the king had caused him more than once to bear hardly upon the Church, and to gain the reputation of being a despiser of the clergy. As archdeacon of Canterbury he must have become fully aware of all the difficulties arising out of the immunities of the clergy from the criminal law. In fact, his double position as a highly placed ecclesiastic and the chief minister of the king made

him thoroughly acquainted with the abuses of both the civil and ecclesiastical government. And yet when made archbishop of Canterbury he chose at once the policy to which he steadily adhered. Without hesitation he set himself to oppose the royal dictatorship. He was no longer merely the king's servant whose duty it was to carry out the king's will. He had acquired national responsibilities with the acquisition of the ecclesiastical headship of the nation. In 1163 Henry, at a council held at Woodstock, required that the aid by custom paid locally to the sheriff should be paid direct into the exchequer. But this was the source from which the sheriffs made most of their profits, and Becket saw that if this item of revenue was taken away from them they would have to make up for their loss by increased exactions in other ways. The net result of the change would be an increase in the revenue of the crown, and a disproportionate increase in the misery of the people. His mind was made up. He refused absolutely to pay the tax on his own lands, and claimed exemption for the lands of the Church He was successful in his refusal. It was the first time since the Conquest that the will of the king had been overcome in a matter of taxation.

His refusal to pay the sheriff's aid, 1163.

Later in the year a more serious quarrel broke out. Since the separation of the ecclesiastical from the temporal courts by William I., a system had grown up under which all clerical offenders, even against the ordinary criminal law, such as the law of murder or of theft, were punishable only in the ecclesiastical courts. Thus, however heinous their crime might be proved to be, they were only liable to be punished by the ecclesiastical censures of deprivation and excommunication, and were not like lay criminals in danger of losing life or limb, though apparently, in some cases, they might be imprisoned for a long term of years. This inequality of punishment was bad enough, but the evil was increased a hundred-fold by the easy way in which the bishops were in the habit of conferring the tonsure. To have received the tonsure was sufficient to give a man his benefit of clergy; and every one

His support of clerical immunities.

who could read or write, whether his profession was that of a lawyer, a secretary, a government official, or a clerk, received the tonsure. There thus grew up in the lower ranks of the clergy a numerous body of needy, turbulent, and lawless men who discharged no clerical functions, and were subject to no clerical discipline, but were protected from the just punishment of their deeds by clerical privilege. Henry proposed to deal with the evil in a straightforward way. A clerk accused of crime was to be tried in the ecclesiastical court, but on conviction was to be brought into the king's court to receive sentence. Thus his benefit of clergy would avail him only for trial, and not for punishment, and similar punishment would be meted out to all. But Becket was suspicious even of so small a diminution of clerical privileges, and apparently with reason, for on his refusal to accept the king's proposal, Henry rounded on him with a vague demand that he would promise to obey the ancient customs of the realm. Becket cautiously replied that he would do so saving his order, and the king angrily broke up the conference.

In the January of the next year, a meeting was held at Clarendon in which Henry produced a list of thirteen constitutions which he said embodied the ancient customs to which he referred, and required Becket to swear obedience to them. These were the famous Constitutions of Clarendon. The most important of them were the following:—

The Constitutions of Clarendon, 1164.

I. Questions about advowsons and the right of presentation to churches were to be decided in the king's court.

III. Clergy accused of crime were not to be further protected by the Church after conviction in the ecclesiastical court.

VIII. Appeals were to go from the archdeacon to the bishop, and from the bishop to the archbishop. If the archbishop failed to do justice, the cause was to be settled in the archbishop's court by the precept of the king, and not to go further without the king's leave.

XI. Archbishops, bishops, and all beneficed clergy, who held of the king in chief, were to hold their possessions by barony.

XII. The rents of archbishoprics, bishoprics, abbacies, and priories were to go to the king during vacancy. The vacancies were to be filled by election by the principal clergy in the king's chapel, with the consent of the king and his council.

XIII. Sons of villeins were not to be ordained without the consent of their lords.

The reduction of the constitutions to writing fully justified Becket's caution. Some of them undoubtedly enunciated customs as old at any rate as William the Conqueror, and steadily acted upon ever since. That no archbishop or bishop should leave the country without the king's consent, and that no tenant-in-chief or minister of the crown should be excommunicated without notice to the king or his justiciar, were enumerated as customs of the Church of England in the days of William I. The arrangement by which the king was to control all the appointments of the higher clergy was part of the compromise between Anselm and Henry I. in 1107. But that appeals should not go to Rome without the king's leave was an ancient custom of the Church and realm, which since the time of Anselm had been more honoured in the breach than the observance; while the doctrines that the higher clergy held their lands by barony, and that the rents and profits reverted to the crown on a vacancy, were oppressive and new-fangled inventions of the feudal lawyers.

Still, whatever might be the history of each particular clause, there could be no doubt that the general effect of the Constitutions was to bring the administration of the Church far more distinctly under the control of the crown than it had been ever before. To Becket they seemed but the expression of a masterful will, determined to reduce all men to a dead level of slavery. But it was very difficult for him to refuse his consent. Nearly all the barons and many of the bishops were urging him to yield. Even the pope let it be known that he did not countenance

opposition to the royal will. Passions were becoming excited, and the lives of Becket's supporters were at stake. In a moment of weakness the archbishop was prevailed upon to surrender his own better judgment and accept the constitutions. Hardly were the words out of his mouth, than he saw what a mistake he had committed. Henry triumphantly demanded that he should set his archiepiscopal seal to them, and swear publicly to observe them. Not content with a personal acquiescence he demanded an official recognition. He would compromise not merely Becket himself, but the whole Church of England for ever. Becket at once saw the danger. Publicly lamenting his lapse he withdrew his consent, set himself a penance for his unworthy compliance, and prepared to fly to the continent and invoke the aid of the pope.

But no one dared to brave the anger of the king, or assist the archbishop in his flight. The autumn found him still in England and at Henry's mercy. He was summoned to attend a council held at Northampton in October 1164. He obeyed, going as all men thought to his doom. But Henry was no Commodus to delight in blood for its own sake. The cruel Angevin race loved to crush the heart out of their victims, rather than drain their life blood. The king preferred to demand from the archbishop an exact and immediate account of the receipts and expenditure of all the bishoprics and abbacies administered by him for the king's benefit during his chancellorship, although he had received his discharge in full on quitting office. Such a demand plainly meant his ruin; Becket interpreted it to mean his death too. Proceeding to the church, he said the mass of the protomartyr S. Stephen at S. Stephen's altar in obvious reference to his own position, then taking his metropolitical cross in his own hands, made his way to the council chamber. The king refused to see him. Sending for the bishops and barons he deliberated with them on the archbishop's punishment, while Becket sat alone in the outer chamber, clasping his cross, deserted by all. At last the debate was finished, and Robert of Leicester issued forth to notify to the archbishop his doom. But

Council of Northampton, 1164.

before he could speak the words Becket arose, his cross in his hand. 'Robert,' he said, 'by the allegiance you owe me as your spiritual father, I forbid you to speak.' Leicester hesitated, and Becket swept out from the hall amid the muttered curses of the lawless retainers of the king. He knew that the breach was complete. The alternative before him was death or flight. Hurrying away in disguise in the dead of night, he got him safely across the sea, laid his complaint at the feet of pope Alexander III. and Louis VII. of France, and retired at their suggestion to the Cistercian monastery at Pontigny, where he embraced a life of the severest discipline.

Exile of Becket, 1164-1170.

But bodily asceticism did not mean with Becket spiritual self-control. Never was he more determined to claim every tittle of his privileges and exercise every right of revenge, than when he was a pensioner on the bounty of the abbot of Pontigny. He cited Henry to submit to his censures. He prepared to launch an excommunication against him. On Ascension Day 1166 he did, in fact, excommunicate John of Oxford, dean of Salisbury, one of his bitterest opponents. On the other hand Henry replied by seizing the property of the relatives of the archbishop, and exiling them from England to the number of about 400, and threatening to expel the whole Cistercian order unless they drove him from Pontigny. In 1170 he went out of his way to add a new cause of difference between himself and Becket, by having his eldest son crowned by the archbishop of York in manifest derogation of the rights of Canterbury, although he had by that time made up his mind to effect a reconciliation. Henry learned that Becket the exile was a much more dangerous person than Becket the primate, and found it necessary to dissemble his hate in the interests of his crown.

His return and murder, 1170.

In July 1170 terms were agreed upon at Freteval, and on December 1st the archbishop once more landed in England. His progress to Canterbury was a triumphal march. The people had ever recognised him as their champion, they now welcomed him as their deliverer. But Becket

returned not as the deliverer but as the avenger. A few days before his landing, he had procured the publication of a papal excommunication against the bishops who had taken part in the coronation. His first act on his return was a haughty refusal to absolve them unless they acknowledged their fault and promised obedience in the future. In this no doubt he was technically acting according to law. But on Christmas Day he went on to excommunicate some of the king's barons who had opposed him. It was this which wrought his death. Henry, on hearing of it, broke into one of his furious fits of anger. Four knights, with whom the wish was father to the thought, interpreted his tempestuous words into a demand for the archbishop's life. Hurrying to Canterbury they forced their way unarmed into Becket's presence on December 29th, and demanded that he should remove the excommunication. Becket, though he foresaw what would happen, sternly refused; and the knights denouncing him as a traitor, withdrew to assume their arms and summon help in the name of the king. The bell for vespers began to sound, and the archbishop, with his cross borne in front of him, made his way as usual into the cathedral. Hardly had he reached the ascent to the choir than the noise of armed men and the shout of the knights announced that the pursuers were at hand. 'Where is the archbishop, where is the traitor?' resounded through the hollow aisles, mingling strangely with the recitation of the psalms in the choir. Becket, hearing this, turned back a few steps, and calmly awaited their approach in the corner of the northern transept before the little altar of S. Benedict. 'Here,' he cried, 'is the archbishop—no traitor, but a priest of God.' Awed by his demeanour, and perhaps by the sanctity of the place, no one dared to strike. A parley began. They sought to lash their failing courage into action by words. A hasty and insulting epithet gave Fitz Urse the opportunity he wanted. A blow aimed at the archbishop's head only knocked his skull-cap to the ground, but it was enough to loose the bandogs of hell. A stroke from Tracy cut off the tonsured back of his skull, another from Brito brought him to his knees. In a minute all was

over. The archbishop lay prone in his blood before the altar step, his brains scattered savagely on the floor, while his murderers slunk back through the dark and silent aisles with the chill of remorse already at their hearts, like Othello from the couch of Desdemona.

Estimate of his career.

Becket like Charles I. triumphed more by his death than he could have done in his life. His pride, his temper, his obstinacy, his revengefulness were all swept out of men's minds by the tragic dignity of his death. A saint he had never been. He had but worn the outer garb of ascetic mortification in the loathsome punishment of his body. The higher discipline of the character—self-control, charity, long-suffering—were never within his grasp. Becket is as far removed from Anselm as was Pius V. from S. Philip Neri. A martyr he truly was in the full sense of the word—a witness to the right of the Church to independence of the civil power, an advocate of liberty against overweening authority. With quick, unerring instinct the people of England seized upon the truth which lay behind all the mistakes of detail. They forgot the unwise championship of an unequal criminal law. They forgot the angry denunciations, the revengeful excommunications, the imperious temper, which had characterised Becket's conduct in exile. They forgave the theatrical desire for martyrdom which had distinguished him since the council of Northampton. They remembered how in the dark days of the stern Angevin rule, when the king's hand pressed hard upon every one; when the king's justice in the king's courts was but the official expression of the king's personal will; when government by the king's ministers meant little beyond the authoritative enforcement of every royal demand; when the barons were the king's men, tied to him by all the chains of feudal law, but carefully debarred from feudal independence; when bishops were the king's officials, trained in his service, owing to him their position, their dignity, their very bread; when lawyers, inspired by Roman law, were moulding every institution in the interests of the king; when the free holding of land had almost passed away; when representative

institutions impregnated by the spirit of liberty were yet to be—one man, and one man only, was found to withstand the despot in the very crisis of his power, one institution to raise the banner of liberty against that of personal will, one martyr ready to die rather than surrender to the king what he believed to be the rights of the Church. The occasion of Becket's death was pitiful enough, the subject-matter of his quarrel most questionable, but the principle upon which he acted was sound and true. This men realised. They knelt at his shrine, they venerated his relics, they eagerly accepted stories of his miracles, they implored his intercession, they canonised him in their hearts, not because he was a supporter of clerical privilege, but because he was the opponent of personal tyranny.

Henry had to bow before the storm. In the summer of 1174 he knelt in abject humiliation before his victim's tomb and submitted to public penance. The constitutions of Clarendon, as far as they embodied new legislation, had practically to be withdrawn. Until the Reformation no further check was placed upon appeals to Rome than was imposed by the common law right of the king to prevent papal letters from being introduced into the country, and his subjects from leaving it with, out his consent. Benefit of clergy was definitely granted. In 1176 Henry agreed that no tonsured person should be tried or sentenced by a civil court on a criminal charge, except on a charge against the forest law. Two of the chief points for which Becket had fought during his life were decided in his favour by his death. Both of them proved before long to be the fruitful parents of innumerable scandals. When the papal courts became far more corrupt than the king's courts, and the national ecclesiastical law became worse administered than the king's criminal law, a state of affairs began to exist exactly contrary to that with which Becket had to deal. Papal appeals and benefit of clergy were used to screen the guilty, not to protect the helpless. They became an abuse, not a safeguard—a means by which the powerful and the wealthy might defeat the ends of justice, and evade the due reward of their deeds. But no

Direct results of the struggle.

king was found bold enough to deal directly with the evil. The shadowy form of the great archbishop stood ever behind his order, like Athena behind Diomed, to protect its privileges even in their degeneracy. Kings found it safer to share the plunder of the clergy by unholy alliances with the pope, than to renew the contest between Church and State which was associated in the minds of all men with the traditions of Becket, and hallowed by the memory of his martyrdom.

CHAPTER VII

THE CHURCH AND ENGLISH LIBERTY

A.D. 1176-1297

Position of the Church in the twelfth century.

By the successful issue of the struggle with the crown in the century which followed the Norman Conquest, the Church had gained a position of independence in the realm at once commanding and unique. Organised as a society apart from the State, for the worship of God and the religious government of man, with her own administrators, her own legislature, her own code of law, her own courts of justice, her own sentences of punishment, extending even beyond the mysterious portals of death, she wielded an authority equal, and where conscience was tender superior, to that of the king. Yet without the king's peace and support she could not exercise one of her powers, or fulfil the simplest of her duties. Without the protection of the king's law her bishops and clergy could obtain no rent, could gather no tithe, by which to live. Not a synod could meet, not a service be held, not a court of justice assemble if the king chose to interfere. Not a sentence having any effect in this life could be enforced except by the king's consent. The whole basis on which the power of the Church rested was moral, and moral only. If she required the assistance of physical force she had to apply to the king. That is the secret of the apparent weakness of Anselm and of Becket in the face of the king, and of their real strength. He was absolute master of their persons, their revenues, their lives. He could drive them into exile, make them and their families paupers, bring about their death by a

hasty word, but over their consciences he was powerless. The cause triumphed though the man suffered. Wherever physical force, in the whole history of the world, has sought to overcome conscience, it has always failed. It may exterminate, it cannot conquer. Sooner or later the moral sense of mankind rises against oppression, and the weapons of physical force fail in the tyrant's hands like Klingsor's hellish arts before the spear of the Holy Grail.

Nevertheless, in an age when the king was all-powerful over the lives and property of men, when he had established the authority of his will absolutely over the reluctant baronage and the enslaved people, when the last remains of local independence were being rooted out by centralised institutions, it was natural that the Church of England should not be content to rely simply upon her own moral power in her efforts to preserve her independence. Great and sacred as might be the prestige and the traditions of the Church of England, the prestige and the traditions of the papacy were greater and more sacred still. The Norman Conquest had brought the two into closer contact.

Close alliance with the papacy.

The struggle between the Church and the crown welded them into the closest of alliances. England sought from the papacy the moral support of the most powerful of western institutions, the political assistance of the most ambitious among all the western sovereigns. Against a king who ruled half France as well as England, there was no ally so able to help as one who could appeal to European monarchs, both as their political equal and their spiritual father. The papacy, on the other hand, sought to extend the bounds of its dominion, to establish direct enforceable rights over a country which had hitherto been less under its control than any other part of western Christendom, to use the wealth of England to assist it in the death struggle which it was waging with the empire. The popes were willing to help the Church of England to keep herself independent of the authority of the crown, provided they were permitted to establish their own tyranny in the place of the ousted king. Shylock did not more ruthlessly exact

his pound of flesh from his Christian debtor than did the popes the acknowledgment of their authority by England as the price of their assistance. Throughout the last centuries of the Middle Ages the Church of England found herself ever shifting uneasily from one horn of the dilemma to the other, in the vain hope of preserving her liberties intact. Threatened by the tyranny of a strong or wicked king she called to her aid the power of a masterful and greedy pope. Ruined by papal exactions, abused by papal misgovernment, she turned in her need to implore the protection of a powerful and ambitious king. That she succeeded in keeping a good deal of independence in the appointment of her clergy, the enactment of her laws, and the administration of her affairs, must be ascribed mainly to the fact that danger from a common tyranny bound Church and baronage and commonalty together in a mutual alliance. The success of the Church in her struggle with the king taught the baronage how to fight its own battle. The success of the baronage and the Church helped the commonalty to organise its own forces. The three powers were sometimes united, sometimes disunited and even antagonistic, but they never seriously injured each other, while they often brought to each other aid of the deepest moment. It was not until the baronage had been finally crushed by the crown, and the commonalty were leaderless and powerless, that Church and people alike were forced to kiss the sceptre of the despot.

During the thirteenth century all three powers were united together, under the leadership of the Church, in the defence of their common liberties against the crown. In the earlier struggles of the twelfth century the people had never faltered in their support of the Church against the crown, any more than they had in the support of the crown against the baronage. They had raised their feeble voices for Anselm against William Rufus, and for Becket against Henry II., just as they had bared their strong arms to win victory for the Red King over Roger of Shrewsbury, and for Henry I. over Robert of Belesme. A sure instinct told them that of all the

Alliance with the people.

great institutions of England the Church was most on the side of the people, and next to the Church, the crown. The baronage had on the whole been the common enemy of both, though at times, as at the council of Rockingham, it had felt its own safety imperilled by the tyranny of the king, and had cast in its lot with the Church. The papacy, too, had been forward to assist the national Church in maintaining a higher ideal of government and greater spiritual liberty. Papal influence had been usually exercised in favour of peace and of justice. Appeals to Rome had meant the assertion of a law of duty in the place of a law of power. The question of investitures, the enforcement of clerical celibacy, the strong efforts to crush simony, were conceived in the interests of a higher morality though they ministered to the greed of personal ambition.

But by the end of the century the conditions had much altered. The establishment of a strong administrative system, under the control of the royal lawyers, by Henry I. and Henry II. had made the crown, and not the baronage, the chief danger to civil and personal liberty. The baronage accordingly drew nearer to the Church for protection against a common danger. But the Church, though she had emerged successfully from her contest with the king, was not in so good a position to act as she had been in previous years. The policy of the papacy had somewhat changed. The popes found themselves burdened with a long and costly struggle with the empire. Insecure even in Rome itself, threatened by anti-popes, in danger of invasion, they thought it necessary to gain political power in order freely to discharge their spiritual functions. They desired above all things to unite Christendom in a great crusade against the infidel, but they found themselves hampered on every side by want of money, by the rivalries of princes, and by their own political insignificance. So not unnaturally they surrendered to the temptation. They sought by all the means at their disposal to gain both money and political power. They became more and more immersed in political schemes. They

Selfish policy of the papacy.

degraded their spiritual prerogative by using it to further their ambition. They allied themselves with princes, and betrayed to them the interests of the people and even of the clergy. In England this altered policy took a double form. From the end of the twelfth century to the Reformation the consistent aim of the papacy was to gain as much direct authority over England as possible, and to use that authority when gained for the purpose of obtaining money.

The policy was mean and unworthy, but it was not consciously or cynically wicked. To the Italian or French prelate who ruled at Rome or at Avignon English interests were as nothing compared with those of Italy or France. To him the fortunes of the world found their centre on the shores of the Mediterranean. There, as ever, were being fought out the critical and absorbing questions which were to decide the fate of civilisation and the Church. To the solution of these questions England could make no direct contribution. Entrenched behind her streak of silver sea she was, for the most part, unaffected by them. But her very isolation made her rich, her history stamped her as devout. In the division of labour which the welfare of the commonwealth of Christendom demanded, her function was clearly to provide the material aid necessary to secure the success of the Church.

Mixed motives of the popes.

In the history of the dealings of the papacy with the English Church in the Middle Ages we find, accordingly, a strange mixture of moral government, political tyranny, and gross rapacity, and each motive must be duly allowed its true weight if we would rightly estimate the relations between the two powers. A good instance of this is afforded by the history of the question of appeals. In the time of Anselm, as we have seen, the claim of the pope to decide his case on appeal from the king was conceived in the interests of both justice and religion. But after the acquiescence of Henry I. in the claim, and especially during the troubled reign of Stephen, the practice of appeal grew into a system which was at once

The question of appeals.

detrimental to the nation and profitable to the papal lawyers. Still it had its justification in the disordered state of the national courts. That justification vanished when Henry II. brought the judicial system once more into order; but its place was taken by the fear that royal justice meant in the end royal tyranny. No provision of the constitutions of Clarendon, except that which dealt with criminous clerks, was more objectionable to Becket and the clergy than the one which provided for the decision of appeals by the king's writ in the archbishop's court, and in 1176 the king had to renounce it. From that time the right of the pope to hear and decide cases on appeal from England was unquestioned until the Reformation. Following the appeal business to Rome went naturally an immense trade in dispensations. This the papal court soon found to be much more lucrative and much less troublesome than the decision of judicial appeals. Laws were made largely in order that they might be dispensed with for money. As the dispensation business grew, the interest of the papal lawyers in the judicial business shrunk. After the legal system established by Edward I. became completely organised, the popes made little difficulty about permitting the king to withdraw from them most of the appeal cases. In the fifteenth century, although every English bishop found it necessary to have an agent at the papal court, and to distribute large sums among the officials in order to secure his interests, appeals very rarely went to Rome, except in matrimonial cases which were always lucrative. Here, as in other things, we see the working of the double motive. The papacy was ready to surrender a claim which it was no longer necessary in the interests of religion and justice to keep, but only in those cases where its maintenance had ceased to be lucrative.

The history of the office of legate brings into relief the ambition rather than the greed of the mediæval popes. It had been customary from time to time, when any matter of particular moment was in debate between the pope and the king or the Church, for the pope to send a special envoy to discuss, or where

his decision had been asked for to decide, the question. Such envoys were known as *Legati a latere*. After the Norman Conquest the popes tried to develop this practice into a system by which they should get the whole of the metropolitical authority of the archbishops of Canterbury and York into their own hands. They claimed the power of appointing by commission a resident representative of the papacy in England by the title of *Legatus ordinarius*, and asserted that, in virtue of his commission from them as universal bishops, he was clothed with supreme ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the English Church, and took precedence of both metropolitans during the tenure of his office. The king could, of course, always prevent the exercise of this prerogative through his admitted right to refuse a legate admission into the kingdom; but it often happened that, through weakness or policy, it was to the interest of the king to be compliant. In 1126, in order to settle the long-standing dispute with the see of York about precedence, William of Corbeil accepted the office of legate from Honorius II. with the approval of Henry I. When an archbishop of Canterbury was made legate nobody was much injured except the archbishop of York; but in 1139 Innocent II. took advantage of the weakness of Stephen to appoint Henry, bishop of Winchester, to be ordinary legate. He thus placed the archbishop of Canterbury in subjection to one of his own suffragans, cleverly calculating that the archbishops of Canterbury in the future would be not only willing but anxious to avoid the repetition of so grave an outrage by assuming the chains of slavery themselves. The event proved that he was right. After the time of Stephen Langton it became as customary for each succeeding archbishop of Canterbury to receive his legatine commission from the pope as it was to receive his pall, and the chief practical evil produced by the system was that it helped to familiarise men's minds with the doctrine of papal supremacy, and caused hopeless confusion between the metropolitical and legatine powers of the archbishops of Canterbury.

The question of the papal legates.

In the year 1205 a disputed election to the see of Canterbury gave pope Innocent III. an opportunity of making good a further claim over the Church and crown of England. Before the Norman Conquest archbishops and bishops had usually been appointed by the king and Witan; after the Conquest by the king, with some show of approval on the part of the Great Council. But by the arrangement arrived at between Henry I. and Anselm, it was agreed that the cathedral chapters should receive the right of election, but that the election should take place under the control of the king or his justiciar, so that there might be no doubt of the success of the king's nominee. The result was an unseemly struggle between the different parties concerned to defeat the rights of the others. The chapters tried to elect candidates of their own instead of those nominated by the king. The king tried to reduce the canonical election to a nullity. The popes took advantage of kingly weakness and capitular insurbordination to get a voice in the matter for themselves by claiming the right to decide disputed elections. But by the end of the twelfth century it had become fairly well established that the chapter or convent, as the case might be, of the cathedral church had the right to elect; that the king had the rights of issuing a license to elect, recommending a candidate, and approving of the election when made; that the bishops of the province had the right of consecrating the bishop-elect, and the pope that of deciding on appeal any question which might arise as to the legality of the proceedings.

Question of the appointment of bishops.

On the death of Hubert Walter in 1205 a pretty, though not very creditable, quarrel broke out. Hardly was the breath out of the archbishop's body than part of the convent of Christ Church, Canterbury, seized upon their sub-prior, Reginald, elected him archbishop, and sent him off post-haste to Rome to obtain his pall before the king or any one else should hear of the matter. When the excitement was over, the time for reflection and repentance came. The whole convent, ignoring what had been done, meekly asked

Disputed election at Canterbury, 1205.

the permission of king John to make an election, obediently elected his nominee, de Grey, bishop of Norwich, to be archbishop, and prudently despatched some of their body to Rome to explain the matter to Innocent. The pope seized the opportunity with his accustomed vigour, summarily set aside the claims of both Reginald and de Grey, and ordered the deputation of Canterbury monks there and then to elect cardinal Stephen Langton, an Englishman resident in Rome and a friend of his own. Feeling themselves between the hammer and the anvil the poor monks tremblingly obeyed. Neither they nor the pope knew what they had done. They only sought to save their skins. Innocent only thought of establishing a useful claim to control the election of an English primate. Neither side suspected that they were sending to England the champion of the national Church and the harbinger of national freedom.

Quarrel between John and the Pope, 1207-1213.

So in the event it proved, but in the meantime a bitter and relentless battle had to be fought. John, cruel, false, wicked and profligate though he might be, was not so lost to all sense of pride and shame as to surrender the undoubted rights of his crown to the pope except upon compulsion. On hearing of the consecration of Langton by Innocent on the 17th of June, 1207, he burst into one of the mad fits of rage characteristic of his race. He drove the monks of Christ Church over the sea to Flanders, and threatened to send the clergy after them. By the teeth of God, he impiously swore, if he found any Romans in his land he would send them to the pope blind and mutilated. But Innocent was made of stuff too stern to be frightened by wild language such as this. He had counted the cost carefully before he had committed himself to the struggle, but when he had once embarked upon it no power on earth or in heaven short of death could stay his hand. He knew the unstable character of John, he reckoned on his unpopularity. Deliberately he launched his thunderbolts upon his devoted head. On the 24th of March, 1208, he put the whole of England under an interdict. The churches were closed, the celebration of mass, the communion of the faithful, the public

recitation of the daily offices, the Christian burial of the dead ceased, only baptism and private ministrations were permitted. Even the Cistercians, who had a special permission to be excluded from the operations of interdicts, were compelled in this case to forgo their privilege.

Such a measure punished only the innocent and the religious. A hardened blasphemer like John made it an occasion of profit. The clergy were treated as outside the protection of the law. Their property was confiscated, their persons attacked, their lives treated as of no account. With a grim sense of humour, their uncanonical wives were seized by the king's special orders and put to ransom. The wicked king grew richer and stronger, and fattened upon his wickedness. The pope prepared his next blow. In 1209 John was excommunicated. No one cared publish the bull in England. Outwardly things went on as before. But the king knew that the sentence was pronounced. He grew more suspicious and more tyrannical. The prisons were filled with victims. Torture and outrage were rife throughout the land. Men began to weary of such a life. Plots and conspiracies were everywhere in the air. Still the sullen king remained obstinate, and refused all attempts at a compromise. In 1211 Innocent threatened to issue a bull of deposition, absolve his subjects from their allegiance, and call upon Philip of France to carry out the sentence. For a year John still attempted to brave it out. He tried to collect forces. He seized the castles of some of the disaffected barons. But in the beginning of 1213 he realised that he could hold out no longer. He had not a friend in England, while over the sea powerful and vindictive enemies were but waiting for the word to wreak their vengeance upon him. In desperation he determined to give himself wholly into Innocent's hands, and secure him as his friend and supporter at all hazards. In the spring of 1213 he not only consented to receive Stephen Langton, and make full restitution to the clergy, but surrendered the kingdoms of England and Ireland to the pope and his successors, and received them back from him as his feudal vassal, swearing to him fealty, promising

Submission of John, 1213.

him tribute, and pledging himself to defend his temporal power.

Thus, not a hundred and fifty years after the Norman Conquest, the dream of Hildebrand had been realised by Innocent III. The homage repudiated so steadfastly by William I. had been granted by the degenerate John. England had become a fief of the papacy. For a century this new feudal relation of lord and vassal sadly complicated the relations between England and the pope. Feudal lordship in the hands of an Italian bishop need not perhaps, if construed strictly, have meant much more to the king of England than feudal lordship in the hands of the king of Paris meant to the duke of Normandy. But feudal lordship in the hands of men who claimed complete ecclesiastical supremacy over all baptized Englishmen as members of the Catholic Church, who were in the habit of exercising very definite legal powers over the clergy of England as their ecclesiastical inferiors, and were able to bring strong political influence to bear upon kings and governments, was a very different thing. When the popes sent legates, demanded taxes, controlled appointments, collected money in the thirteenth century, it was often difficult to say whether they did it by virtue of their ecclesiastical or their feudal position, and it often happened that the feudal lord succeeded in establishing rights which would have been strenuously denied to the ecclesiastical head.

Indirect results of the submission.

For the moment the most important result of John's submission was the arrival of Stephen Langton in England. With the eye of a statesman he took in the whole situation at a glance. Clasping all the strings of administration in his hands the king, though hated and hateful, must be all powerful. The baronage, leaderless and divided, might murmur or rebel, but they had nothing to oppose to the royal tyranny except vague demands for the shadowy liberties of the past. The people had not political capacity enough to take action for themselves. They suffered in silence and patience, not knowing what they wanted. The Church and the Church

Policy of Stephen Langton.

alone, with its superior education, its own aptitude for government, its old traditions of popular support, and its prestige of recent victory, could point the way to reform and formulate a policy. The king's will governed the law—there was the evil. That the law should govern the king's will—there was the remedy. Henry II. gave to England a good administration of the law. Stephen Langton gave to the government good law to administer. Rights and liberties were no longer to be vague and shadowy things half-veiled in sentiment, they were to be written down fair in black and white and embodied in a charter. At a meeting of the baronage and clergy at S. Paul's on August 25th, 1213, the archbishop produced a copy of the charter of Henry I., explained the nature of the liberties which it guaranteed, and took an oath from all present not to rest until those liberties had been secured. Two years afterwards, on June 15th, 1215, the signature of the Great Charter by John at Runnymede set the seal to this policy, and gave to the English nation the foundation and the witness of its essential freedom.

Signature of the Great Charter, 1215.

While Langton was guiding the English nation wisely along the path of liberty, Innocent was impetuously endeavouring to reduce England under tyranny. No sooner had John made his submission than, with strange indifference to the claims of religion and morality, the pope welcomed him at once as the faithful son of the Church, and supported his throne with all the means in his power. He annulled the Great Charter. He excommunicated the barons who had signed it. He suspended Stephen Langton for refusing to publish the excommunication. He threatened the thunders of the Church against Louis of France who claimed the crown of England. He summoned the parties before his own tribunal, argued for John as an advocate, and decided in his favour as a judge. With such powerful support at his back John was able to renew the struggle, but fortunately for England both pope and king fell victims to death in 1216. The new pope, Honorius III.,

Policy of Innocent III.

Reversed by Honorius III., 1216.

recognised accomplished facts. His legate, Gualo, co-operated with the regent, the earl of Pembroke, in restoring peace and order on the basis of the Charter, and in smoothing the passage of Louis back across the water. For a brief period during the minority of Henry III., under the firm and wise governance of Stephen Langton, the Church of England had peace.

Importance of the reign of Henry III., 1216-1272.

By the passing of the Great Charter in the reign of John, the foundation of the liberties of the English nation was laid, but the fabric was not secured until the establishment of Parliament by Edward I. It was not enough that there should be a document to which to appeal when liberties had been grossly violated, it was necessary that there should be a living organisation always at hand to prevent them from being violated at all. This was the special work of the eighty years which followed the granting of the Charter. By gradual steps, by natural growth, the solution of difficulties worked itself out. At first men claimed simply the reissue, the confirmation of the Charter, when government went amiss. Then they tried the temporary supersession of the government itself by their own nominees. Then they took the government boldly into their own hands, and called a representative body of the whole nation to support their power and justify their action. Lastly, Edward I., recognising the strength of representative institutions, gave permanence to such a body in the form of Parliament. He boldly called upon the nation to take part in its own affairs. In this great national work the Church took her full share. It was from the Church that the principle of representation was borrowed. Archbishops of Canterbury like Stephen Langton and Edmond Rich took the lead in opposition to tyranny and misgovernment. Bishops like Robert Grosseteste, and friars like Adam de Marisco, were the strenuous supporters of Simon de Montfort. So close was the sympathy between the Church and the earl that the barons' war was looked upon in the light of a crusade, and the cause of Simon de Montfort preached as the cause of God. The Church stood forth as the nursing mother of English liberty. But from the time of the submission

of John to the papacy we are conscious of a great division in the ranks of the Church itself. The popes are no longer the champions of moral freedom against royal tyranny. Kings are no longer the defenders of insular privilege and national right against papal aggression. Pope and king find it to their mutual interest to assist each other to domineer over the nation. Self-interest cemented the unholy alliance suggested by their feudal relation. How could clergy or people resist the combined power of their spiritual and temporal lords? So the king left the Church open to the depredations of the pope, and the pope supported the king in his extravagance and misgovernment.

Alliance of pope and king against the Church and nation.

In this policy the official clergy and the courtiers naturally followed the pope and the king on whom they depended. The whole force of the administration, the influence of the men in whose hands lay the strings of government, was on that side. For the first sixteen years of the reign of Henry III. it is true this tendency was not so marked. During the minority of the king, pope Honorius III. and archbishop Stephen Langton co-operated with Pembroke and Hubert de Burgh to secure the safety of the throne and the liberties of the nation. But in 1227 Henry III. declared himself of age, and Gregory IX. succeeded to the papal chair. From that moment all went amiss. The young king, fretful in temper, impatient of control, ever nourishing splendid designs, incapable of carrying one of them into effect, was the sport of favourites and the tool of foreigners. Religion and gratitude combined with pride to throw him into the hands of the pope to save himself from the barons who would control him.

Hubert de Burgh was dismissed in 1232. From his overthrow to the battle of Lewes in 1264, all the powers of the government, all the influence of the courtiers, all the efforts of the foreign relations of the king were devoted to the re-establishment of tyranny and the tearing up of the Charters. The pope, on his side, was now engaged in the very crisis of the long struggle with the emperor. In Frederick II.—the wonder of the world, the poet, the philosopher, the freethinker, the warrior; Italian in

his love of culture and Eastern in his love of luxury—the power of the world which Hildebrand had challenged and Innocent III. had stricken to its knees seemed once again incarnate. Gregory IX. and Innocent IV. could conceive of no better use to make of their rights as feudal and spiritual lords of England than to enlist the whole resources of the country in the holy war in which they were engaged. National rights, corporate privileges, the common principles of justice, were ruthlessly violated in order to find money for the pope. England during the reign of Henry III. was sucked dry like an orange by king and pope combined. Both profited by the common tyranny, both accordingly suffered by the common opposition. The opponents of the misgovernment of the king by a natural process made common cause with the victims of the rapacity of the pope, and reaped a common reward. Throughout the thirteenth century the national party in the Church is found in close accord with the national party in the State. Were it not for the Church, the cause of Simon de Montfort could never have triumphed after Evesham. Had it not been for Winchilsey and the clergy, the confirmation of the Charters would never have been obtained from the strong hand of Edward I.

Indeed, in the contemplation of the pecuniary demands of the popes, there was enough to make the most submissive of English Churchmen pause before he admitted the superior moral claims of the papacy to his obedience. In the year 1226 Honorius III. demanded for himself the grant of two prebends in each cathedral. In 1229 Gregory IX. claimed a tenth of all movables from both clergy and laity. Ten years later his legate, Otho, would not rest content until he had secured a fifth of all ecclesiastical revenues for his master. In 1246 Innocent IV. asked for a third of the revenues of their benefices for three years from all resident incumbents, and a half from all non-residents. In 1253 he granted to the king a third of all ecclesiastical tithes for three years, on pretext of a crusade. In 1257 Alexander IV. continued this grant for two years more. In the next year he excommunicated the clergy who had not paid

Papal extortion: 1. Taxation.

it. Such were the worst instances of the direct taxation of the clergy of England at the irresponsible will of the pope, but they were by no means the only instances of papal exactions. The sums actually paid by way of fees to officials of the Roman court were very considerable. But besides these, the pope claimed the right of appointing to English benefices in public patronage. He used it by nominating friends of his own and officials of his court, who of course never went near their parishes, but received the emoluments through an agent, after making provision for the discharge of the necessary duties of the office by the assistance of a vicar. By this system of papal provisions, as it was called, the revenues of the most valuable benefices of England found their way into the hands of non-resident Italians. In 1231 Gregory IX. forbade the English bishops to appoint to any benefices until some Roman friends of his had been provided for. In 1239 he tried to extend the system to benefices in private patronage. In 1240 he required the bishops of Lincoln and Salisbury to find benefices for no less than 300 foreigners. During the rest of the reign of Henry III., and even during that of Edward I., the abuse continued to flourish. It was calculated by Grosseteste in 1253 that the revenue derived by foreign ecclesiastics from English benefices amounted to fully three times the whole royal revenue. In the reign of Edward II. Clement V. extended the system to bishoprics. But the tale of extortion does not end here. In 1256 Alexander IV. claimed first-fruits of the emoluments of bishoprics and benefices as a sort of voluntary offering by the recently appointed incumbents. The demand was renewed by Clement V. in 1306. Soon it crystallised into a system, and is said to have brought into the papal exchequer no less than £160,000 in the forty years immediately preceding the quarrel between Henry VIII. and the papacy. In the face of wanton and wicked extortion such as this, when the spiritual fathers of Christendom seemed to have no thought for their English children, towards whom they had accepted such grave responsibilities, except to starve and to punish and to spoil them, what

2. Provisions.

3. Annates.

Resistance of the Church.

wonder is it that English clergy and laity, who had learned from S. Thomas and Stephen Langton the worth of liberty, who had inherited from S. Wulfstan, S. Anselm, and S. Hugh a passionate love for right, should be forced to recognise in the pope the abettor of tyrants, and even the enemy of souls? Well might the intrepid Grosseteste, bishop of Lincoln, burst forth in the very presence of Innocent IV., like a Hebrew prophet denouncing vice: 'The cause, the fountain, the origin of all this is this court of Rome, not only in that it does not put to flight these evils and purge away these abominations when it alone has the power to do so, but still more because, by its dispensations, provisions, and collations to the pastoral care it appoints, before the eyes of this sun, men such as I have described, not pastors but destroyers of men, and, that it may provide for the livelihood of some one person, hands over to the jaws of the beasts of the field and to eternal death many thousands of souls, for the life of each one of which the Son of God was willing to be condemned to a most shameful death.'

Rapacity, dictated by the ambitious policy of the papacy, and enforced by the dulled conscience of the popes, the English Church had little power to resist. Tyranny and misgovernment in England itself could be dealt with. In the establishment of safeguards of national liberty against the king might be found, too, the surest defence against the pope. Almost to a man the clergy, with the exception of the foreigners, threw in their lot with the barons in the great constitutional struggle which marks the end of the reign of Henry III. They triumphed with Simon de Montfort at Lewes. They formed no inconsiderable part of his Parliament of 1265. They suffered after the fall of the stout earl at Evesham. With the accession of Edward I., in 1272, they had their reward. By his enlightened statesmanship, Parliament was organised to be first the champion, then the guardian, and eventually the dictator of English liberties, and in the chief house of Parliament, as representing the Church, sat the bishops and the more important of the abbots. Under his superintendence, the

Organisation of the Church and the nation by Edward I., 1295.

provincial synods of Canterbury and York assumed a full representative character, and in the form of the Convocations of the clergy obtained in 1283 the sole right of taxing the clerical estate. Had he been able to carry out his will, representatives of the clergy would also have sat in the House of Commons; but the clergy themselves, afraid for their independence, persistently refused to be dragged into such dangerous relations with the king, and were content to leave their parliamentary interests in the hands of the bishops and abbots of the upper house.

Hardly had the constitution taken its permanent form by the organisation of the three estates of the realm in Parliament, than a fresh aggression on the part of the pope brought about a serious crisis. Partly in order to defend the clergy from exaction and partly to clench his own authority over them, Boniface VIII. issued in 1296 the famous bull *Clericis laicos*, which forbade temporal sovereigns to tax their clergy and the clergy to pay taxes to their sovereigns. This put archbishop Winchilsey and the English clergy into a great difficulty, as Edward had just called upon them for an aid to help him in an expedition to Flanders. They accordingly considered the matter in council in January, 1297, but decided that they must obey the papal mandate. Edward at once outlawed the whole of the clergy. This quickly brought the clergy of the province of York to their knees, but the Canterbury Convocation still remained obstinate, and, at the king's command, their lands were seized on the 12th of February. But fortunately for Winchilsey, the barons had their grievances too, though of a different sort, and in the Parliament held at Salisbury twelve days later, encouraged by the resistance of the clergy, the earls of Norfolk and Hereford collected their vassals and prepared for civil war. Edward saw that the combination of clergy and barons was too strong for him. He hastened to reconcile himself personally to the archbishop, and employ him to bring about an understanding. Unlike his father or grandfather, he knew when to yield and how to keep faith when he had

Quarrel between Edward I. and archbishop Winchilsey, 1296.

yielded. By Winchilsey's advice, a petition of grievances was presented to the king, and he was asked solemnly to confirm the Charters. On the 10th October, 1297, the Confirmation of the Charters was carried out, which placed the control of the national purse in the hands of Parliament, and completed the edifice of English constitutional liberty. In nothing does the history of the English people differ more from that of other nations than in the early acquisition by Englishmen of the blessings of national unity and national liberty. England was united when France, Germany, Italy, and Spain were each but an assemblage of ill-assorted units. England was free before most of the nations of Europe had begun to ask what freedom was. Neither of these blessings would have been hers had it not been for the Church. The unity of the Church in the seventh century led to the unity of the nation in the ninth century. Liberty, claimed and championed by the Church against William the Red and Henry of Anjou, was secured by the nation under Simon de Montfort and Edward I. The tree of liberty, it is said, grows indigenous on English soil. It would never have grown at all had not the Church been there to plant the seed, protect the tender shoot, and train its matured and vigorous life.

The Confirmation of the Charters, 1297.

In the picture of the Church of England in the thirteenth century as drawn by history, the struggle for liberty against both pope and king is apt to dominate the whole. It is right to lay stress upon it, for it has had vast and far-reaching effects on English national life both political and ecclesiastical, and undoubtedly it seemed of paramount importance to the men of the day. Yet it no more exhausted the energies of the thirteenth century than did the struggle of Roundhead and Cavalier exhaust those of the seventeenth century. It could not exhaust them, for they were inexhaustible. Never was a period so brilliant in blossom, so fecund in fruit, since the brief span of time which Athens borrowed from her tumults in order to create civilisation. The Middle Ages are, as it were, summed up in the thirteenth

Character of the thirteenth century.

century. The nobility of character, the self-sacrifice, the profundity, the width of grasp, the boldness of thought, the simplicity of faith, the ambition of mind, the luxuriance of intellect, the artistic genius, the technical skill which, consecrated to the service of religion, distinguish the Middle Ages as a whole, find their fullest expression in the thirteenth century. Aspiration in thought, fertility in execution, are the salient characteristics of the time. When men failed they failed from too great loftiness of conception, not as men nowadays fail from timidity and poverty of mind. Walking in the undimmed light of the Catholic Church men forgot that human nature, though redeemed, was still fallen, and placed upon it burdens too heavy for it to bear.

The hierarchical theory of the papacy.

The Hildebrandine theory of the Church, which, looking on all temporal power as necessarily inferior to spiritual power, sought to erect the papacy into a supreme and divine kingdom superior to all earthly kingdoms, and the pope into nothing less than the vicegerent and representative of God upon earth, put before mankind a conception of the sanctity and dignity of government far nobler than anything civilisation yet had known. It asserted the superiority of moral law to physical force. It bound together all Europe, regardless of jarring speech and warring politics, into a recognised unity and fellowship. Men embraced the theory warmly, believed in it implicitly, acted on it enthusiastically. Many of the historical arguments upon which it rested were, as we know now, absolute forgeries. A forged document was produced to show that Constantine had made over to pope Sylvester and his successors the imperial rule over the west. Forged decisions of early popes were adduced to prove their supremacy over the Church in subapostolic times. Much more rested upon the slenderest basis of doubtful fact. It was said that S. Peter was the first bishop of Rome, that he enjoyed a prerogative of government over the other apostles and bishops with which he endowed his successors in the see. It was maintained that a part of this prerogative was the right to bear the two swords of supreme spiritual and temporal authority.

All these statements were historically untrue, or unproven, but no one imagines that the documents were forged, or the historical misstatements made in order that upon them might be founded ambitious schemes of universal rule. Rather they were ushered into the world as the natural corollaries of a theory which everybody held. Believing in the Hildebrandine theory of the papacy, men looked for and found evidence of its existence as a fact. Having found what they expected to find, they adopted it without criticism. Popes deceived themselves just like other people. They believed in the righteousness of their claims, they found evidence ready to hand to establish it, they fortified their claim by the evidence without inquiring further. Even Innocent III. asserted in all good faith in a formal bull that his predecessor, Leo III., had transferred the empire from the east to the west in A.D. 800, and had given it to Charles the Great. What the pope could give it was obvious the pope could resume. It no more occurred to him to ask for proof of the fact before stating it than Englishmen nowadays would ask for proof of the victory of Waterloo. From the time of Hildebrand these ideas had been developing apace. In the thirteenth century they came to maturity. Writers like John of Salisbury and S. Thomas Aquinas expounded them. Bishops, patriotic and learned, like Grosseteste and Edmond Rich, admitted them. The great popes of the century, Innocent III., Gregory IX., Innocent IV., and Boniface VIII., spent their whole lives in maintaining them. What they did not realise was that to be sovereign over sovereigns the pope must sink to be a sovereign among sovereigns. To gain supreme dominion over the world he must fight the battles of the world and use the warfare of the world. The more the Church became a separate empire apart from the governments of the world, the more she found herself involved in material temptations and interests, the more she became mixed up in worldly politics. The pope, instead of being the spiritual father of Europe, became a disturbing influence in its political system. He found himself even obliged to use his spiritual authority, sometimes to compromise

his spiritual duty, in order to preserve his temporal interests, often, as in the case of England, to make his rule hateful by a sordid and rapacious policy.

The Friars.

Tried by the test of success, the mediæval papacy broke down; but it broke down because the ideal which it inspired was too noble for this world. Much the same is true of the Friars. There are few stories in the life of man more touching and more intensely religious than that of S. Francis of Assisi and the first of the Lesser Brethren. To live the life which Christ lived upon earth—that was their ideal, no less than that. Going about doing good in absolute detachment from the world, without houses, without money, without possessions of any sort except their peasant's dress and cord, without even churches, dependent for their food upon the crust of bread and the cup of cold water given in Christian alms, dependent for their nightly lodging upon the half-ruined hovel or even the cavern among the rocks, ever cheerful, ever enthusiastic, with a vivid love of nature, and an all absorbing love of God, calling upon their brother the sun, and their sister the moon, and their brothers the birds to worship with them the God who made them all, S. Francis and his companions conquered the world by poverty. In 1212 he received the papal sanction for his order. Twelve years later the first Franciscan missionaries reached England, and soon found their way to Oxford. There they became known to Grosseteste, at that time one of the most distinguished of Oxford scholars, and he continued their steady protector and champion until his death. But soon they needed no other champion than the witness of their own works and lives. Settling in the densest and most unsavoury parts of mediæval cities they gave themselves especially to the care of the poor, the criminal, and the outcast. The leper and the plague-stricken found the Grey Friar willing to tend their loathsome diseases, when priest and monk passed by on the other side. The simple and the sin-stained, the wretched and the despairing, were attracted by his hard life of poverty and won by his warm love for souls. Soon the worth of the

Franciscans led them naturally into more important posts. They became the leading teachers of Oxford. Adam de Marisco was the confessor of the queen, the friend of Grosseteste, the adviser of Simon de Montfort; John Peckham became archbishop of Canterbury. The old ideal of S. Francis had departed. No longer was poverty the chosen bride, and the literal imitation of Christ the sole aim of the Franciscan's heart. To be a Grey Friar was no longer to live a life but to belong to an order. Still as yet the order was noble and pure and great, and before it began to decay it had acted out an ideal before men's eyes which should never again be wholly lost in the Catholic Church.

If we turn to the thought of the century we find the same characteristic nobleness of ideal overleaping itself in the determination to rise to the highest level. The scholars and the teachers of the thirteenth century took the whole of knowledge as their province. They were content with nothing short of the whole. To know all that was to be known seemed to them an attainable thing. Roger Bacon, the priest and the friar, is the first and for centuries the greatest of students of natural science. S. Thomas Aquinas, the theologian and the philosopher, was a prolific writer on the physical sciences. In art it is the same. Cimabuë and Giotto, Nicholas and John of Pisa, are not the founders of new schools of art, they are the pioneers of a new age. From their inspiration sprang into luxuriant and aspiring life true religious art in its varied expression of fresco, of picture, of sculpture, of cast, of poem, of hymn, which endowed the world with a new power and made religion beautiful. It was born when the citizens of Florence carried the great Madonna of Cimabuë in procession round the town to its appointed home in the church of S. Maria Novella. It died when Raffaelle left Florence for Rome at the bidding of the pope. It rose to its greatest development of spiritual and artistic beauty in later centuries, but it never soared higher into the very presence of God than in the thirteenth century in the paintings of Giotto, in the hymns of Thomas of Celano, and the *Divina Commedia* of

Thought and art of the century.

Dante. If we turn to architecture the same phenomenon meets our gaze. Magnificence of conception, dignity, power, solemnity, play of fancy, originality of detail, all may be found in the Romanesque building of earlier times. The essential note of Gothic architecture is aspiration. To rise higher and higher, nearer and nearer to heaven, was the passionate desire of the Gothic builder. The pointing of the arch in arcade and triforium, the vaulting and pitch of the roof, the crocket, the pinnacle, the spire or lofty tower, all tell the same tale. They tell, no doubt, of greater technical skill, but they speak no less assuredly of a determination to soar above the limitations of earth. In the choir and tower of Lincoln, in the minster of York, in the abbey at Westminster, above all in the cathedral of Salisbury, the same characteristic is plainly visible. It stamps it as work imbued with the spirit of the time, it marks it with the hall-mark of the thirteenth century, of an age of ideals too noble, of aspirations too vast, of ambitions too soaring for human nature to reach, of an age in which there was singularly little which was mean or unworthy, an age of great ventures and great realisations, if also of great failures, an age of statesmen, an age of artists, an age of thinkers, above all, an age of saints, an age which expresses itself most truly in S. Dominic, S. Francis, and S. Thomas Aquinas, which sums itself up most perfectly in Dante.

CHAPTER VIII

THE DECAY OF THE MEDIÆVAL CHURCH

A.D. 1297-1485

THE closing years of the thirteenth century saw the papacy at the zenith of its power and influence. The opening years of the fourteenth century witnessed its collapse. The Hildebrandine theory of the Church, though it abated not one jot of its pretensions as a theory, was shattered in pieces when brought face to face with stubborn facts. The year 1303 saw Boniface VIII., the last of the great popes, die miserably at Rome. Two years later the papacy became national. For seventy years the popes lived at Avignon, were elected under the supervision of the king of France, maintained their court by his permission, followed meekly the policy which he dictated. The spiritual lord of the world became an ornamental adjunct to the court of Paris when France was ruled by a strong king. No sooner was the captivity at Avignon over in 1377, than the great schism broke out. For thirty-nine years western Europe was torn in pieces by the discordant claims of rival popes. Not till the election of Martin V. by the council of Constance, in 1417, did western Christendom once more see its head seated at the centre of imperial power, inheriting the traditions of the imperial city, bearing acknowledged sway over the Church. The very essence of the lofty claims of the papacy on man's obedience lay in the fact of its independence. Its assertion of superiority over the kings and kingdoms of Europe rested on its claim to represent a higher power and administer a higher law than that of the

Collapse of the papacy in the fourteenth century.

nations of the earth. What were the value of such assertions when all men knew that if the voice was the voice of Clement of Avignon, the mind which inspired the voice was the mind of Philip of France? It shook men's belief in the succession of a Divine prerogative from S. Peter to the bishops of Rome, when for forty years they knew not who the rightful successor of S. Peter was. Where was the certainty in faith and morals which the existence of a vicegerent of God upon earth was intended to secure, when no man knew to what quarter to look for guidance?

The supremacy of the papacy as a moral power over the conscience of mankind died in the captivity at Avignon. When the popes regained their power in Europe after the council of Constance, they regained it as the official heads of a great religious organisation, as the rulers of an important temporal sovereignty, not as the supreme judges of the civilised world in faith and morals. No one thought of making a pope of the fifteenth century a supreme judge over individuals, much less over nations. No one expected him to be guided by any higher considerations than his own worldly advantage. By the counter-reformation at the end of the next century the popes, it is true, regained something of their moral authority over their own adherents, but they had lost their empire. Half Europe had deserted their leadership. As an historical fact in the world's history the papacy reaches its climax in the thirteenth century. After the Avignonese captivity has begun men cease to look up to it as supreme, they deal with it as a political equal, sometimes they even question it as morally injurious.

Attack on the administrative power of the pope in England.

In England the fall of the papacy only hastened a process which had already begun. Men were not slow to perceive that the conditions at the end of the thirteenth century were exactly opposite to those under which the popes of the eleventh century had gained their influence over the English Church. Then the English clergy were unspiritual and unintellectual, now they were among the foremost in devotion and knowledge. S. Edmund of

Abingdon and Grosseteste yield to none in sanctity and learning save S. Francis and S. Thomas Aquinas. Then the king's law was capricious and tyrannical, for it depended solely upon the king's will. Now the national law declared in Parliament, and interpreted by an organised judicature, gave the best guarantee possible for the continuity of justice. Then the papal court strove to redress the cruelty and license of royal power by imposing upon sovereigns a higher and more perfect equity. Now it shamelessly sold its justice to the highest bidder, and multiplied technicalities in order to increase the fees. English Churchmen, both clergy and laity, began to realise that the administrative supremacy of the popes cost them dear. They summoned to their aid the spirit of patriotism to combat the spirit of obedience. They appealed once more to the old national feeling to resist encroachments by a foreigner on behalf of foreign interests. When the popes settled at Avignon, and became the avowed partisans of a rival and often hostile power, this feeling naturally increased. As scandals developed in the papacy, and the schism succeeded to the captivity, it grew stronger. The national assembly of Parliament became its mouthpiece, and during the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries statute after statute was passed with the object of checking the interference of the pope in English ecclesiastical affairs. Without for a moment denying or in any way dealing with his claim to be spiritual head of the Catholic Church, and as such to give supreme decisions in matters of faith and morals, the national party in the English Church set themselves to curb his administrative powers. They repudiated feudal obedience. They refused to pay the yearly tribute. They endeavoured to control his claims to levy taxation, to appoint to benefices, to judge on appeal, and obliged him to exercise them by arrangement with the king rather than by virtue of the inherent rights of his prerogative. The anti-papal legislation of the Middle Ages, as well as the earlier anti-papal legislation of Henry VIII., was not directed against the spiritual headship of the Church claimed by the pope but

against some of the administrative incidents of his spiritual position.

But the administrative authority of the pope was by no means the only danger from the ecclesiastical side against which king and Parliament found it necessary to guard. The English clergy themselves were growing too rich and too powerful. They held the chief offices of the State. Clerical corporations—episcopal, collegiate, or monastic—possessed a very large part of the land of England. Some of the monks, especially the Cistercian order, were extensive wool traders. The friars bore the chief rule in the universities. Clerical wealth was felt by the more spiritual of the clergy to be a source of grave scandal to the Church. Clerical power was looked upon by the more envious of the laity as a source of grave danger to the baronage. The baronage retaliated by appropriating to themselves the more wealthy positions in the Church, and the clergy became further deteriorated by the consequent rift between the highest and the lowest in its ranks. All through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries we are conscious of the existence of as deep-seated a feeling of discontent among the people with clerical wealth and clerical power as with papal misgovernment and extortion. It found expression from time to time in literature. It came to the front openly and boldly in times of great popular excitement. Occasionally it broke out in Parliament, and took formal shape under kingly patronage in the statute-book.

Wealth of the clergy.

In the reign of Edward I., almost before Parliament began to have a regular existence, the statute *De Religiosis* was passed in 1279 with the object of preventing the acquisition of land by religious corporations, and the consequent loss of the lucrative rights of relief, wardship, etc., by the feudal lords. As corporations can neither die nor marry, land acquired by them passed, as it was said, to a dead hand (mortmain) because it ceased to yield any feudal profits to its lord. A few years later, probably in 1285, Edward endeavoured to

Anti-papal and anti-clerical legislation.

1 De Religiosis, 1279.

check the encroachments of the ecclesiastical courts by the issue of the writ, or as it is often called the statute, *Circumspecte Agatis*, which confined their jurisdiction to matters which came legitimately under the head of spiritual law. In 1301 the turn of the pope came round. The Parliament of Lincoln energetically repudiated the attempt of Boniface VIII. to adjudicate on the question of over-lordship which had arisen between England and Scotland. In 1307 the Parliament of Carlisle forbade the raising of tallages on monastic property by the pope, and petitioned against papal exactions. In 1341 a layman, Sir Robert Bourchier, was for the first time appointed to the office of chancellor. In 1344 was presented the first of a long series of petitions of the Commons against the undue privileges of the clergy. In 1351 an important step was taken against the continual and increasing encroachments of the pope by the passing of the first statute of Provisors, which made the obtaining of a benefice by reservation or provision from the pope, in derogation of the rights of patrons, an offence punishable by fine or imprisonment. This was quickly followed, in 1353, by the first statute of Præmunire, which made those who sued in foreign courts for matters cognisable in the king's courts subject to the penalty of outlawry. In 1365 this statute was re-enacted and strengthened with special reference to the papal court. In 1366 Parliament finally repudiated the payment of the annual tribute to the pope, agreed to be paid by John, which had been for many years in arrear. In the Parliament of 1371 a strong anti-clerical feeling showed itself. A successful attack was made upon clerical ministers which obliged William of Wykeham to resign the chancellorship, and Church endowments were threatened. In 1390 the statute of Provisors was re-enacted with additional safeguards. In 1391 the scope of the Mortmain act was enlarged. In 1394 the statute of Præmunire was again re-enacted and made more stringent, while the growing dissatis-

2. Circumspecte Agatis, 1285.

3. Refusal of papal claims, 1301-1307.

4. Statute of Provisors, 1351.

5. Statute of Præmunire, 1353.

faction with the existing Church system among the laity was shown most emphatically by the presentation to Parliament of a bill of twelve articles which comprised the conclusions of the Lollards against the Church of England. In 1410 the Commons, probably acting under Lollard influence, made a representation to the king pointing out that by the disendowment of the bishops and monasteries he could found one hundred hospitals and maintain a standing army. It is evident from the mere record of Parliamentary action such as this that in the fourteenth century the Church had ceased to be the leader of the national life, and the clergy the champions of the national liberty. On the contrary, the popes had sunk to be the heads of an elaborate and powerful organisation, whose claims were felt to be incompatible with the national welfare, though their assistance was often necessary to particular kings or politicians, while the higher clergy had lost the leadership of the people, and become instead the objects of their suspicion and envy.

The story is one of general deterioration, but it is not without its brighter side. It was a period in which the Church took up definitely the work of the higher education of the nation. It is true that from the earliest times the Church had ever been mindful of the duty of education and the promotion of learning. Wherever the church or monastery was planted, there the school was planted too. Monasteries like Jarrow in the time of Bede, Glastonbury in the time of Dunstan, or Bec in the time of Lanfranc and Anselm, became both the home and the nursery of knowledge. But the pursuit of learning was not of the essence of the monastic life. Monasteries did not exist for that purpose, though to a great extent they fulfilled it. There was little guarantee for the continuity of study or the formation of a learned society. So in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries grew up the universities as lay corporations for the encouragement of learning and the promotion of education, and students flocked by the thousand to the marshes of Oxford or the fens of Cambridge, to sit at the feet of the greatest teachers of the day. University students of

Educational work of the Church.

the thirteenth century were an independent cosmopolitan race, living from hand to mouth, often hungry, always unruly, congregated in squalid inns and lodging-houses, without discipline and sometimes without religion. Here was the opportunity for the Church. This seething turbulent mass of humanity attracted the friars in the days of their early zeal. Dominicans and Franciscans settled in the grimy purlieus of Paris and Oxford and soon acquired a commanding influence. But more than personal influence was wanted, and Walter de Merton, at the close of the thirteenth century, brought to its aid the consolidating influence of a corporate life. He instituted the collegiate system—the special boast, if the special difficulty of English universities. It was in its essence the foundation of a number of corporate bodies, whose members might live a common life of religion and study in connection with the university. Colleges have in the process of time, in answer to the needs of the day, come to be large educational boarding-houses. Originally they were small corporations of students. But in both capacities they have left a notable mark upon the national character, and have exercised an undeniable influence upon the national Church. They have been the training-grounds of the English clergy. They have kept alive the torch of sacred learning. It has been the boast of the Church of England that her clergy, except for some years during the Reformation, have on the whole been men of learning. This she owes largely to the collegiate system, for the colleges were the special gift of the Church to the higher education of the nation. The university was a lay corporation, colleges are religious corporations. Scholars produced the university. The Church founded the colleges. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries churchman after churchman came forward to found and endow colleges in Oxford and Cambridge. In the middle of the fourteenth century a further step was taken. William of Wykeham, bishop of Winchester and chancellor of England, determined in 1382 to apply the collegiate principle to the training of boys. In founding the college of S. Mary Winton at Winchester for the teaching and

training of boys as a nursery for his college of S. Mary Winton at Oxford, he was the founder of the English public-school system. In the next century foundations for the education of boys played as large a part in the schemes of munificent churchmen as foundations for higher education at the universities. King Henry VI., following in the steps of William of Wykeham, established double foundations at Eton and Cambridge. Archbishop Chichele founded his school at Higham Ferrers as well as his college of All Souls at Oxford. Cardinal Wolsey, had not misfortune overtaken him, would doubtless have intertwined the fortunes of his school at Ipswich with his magnificent foundation of Christ Church.

The vigour of Church life in the fourteenth century was to be found in the humble parsonage, and amid the intellectual strife of the universities, rather than upon the episcopal bench. From Oxford towards the close of the century came the first warning note of doctrinal disagreement. John Wicliffe was a celebrated teacher in the university, and an ardent and subtle disputer on philosophical questions. But his speculations would have remained unheeded except among students, had they not involved the denunciation of the pope and the higher clergy, and, when pushed to their logical issues, threatened the very basis of society. Enthusiastic and fearless in temper, solid in attainment, brilliant in argument, fierce and unsparing even for the Middle Ages in denunciation, he was just the man to fight the battle against clerical power. John of Gaunt and the anti-clerical party used him as a convenient tool with which to stir up popular indignation against William of Wykeham and the clerical ministers. Worldly position, political power, temporal wealth, seemed to Wicliffe to be absolutely incompatible with the clerical office. Like S. Francis of Assisi, he believed that in the life of poverty was to be found the true following of Christ. But unlike S. Francis he vindicated his position by attacking those who held a different theory instead of simply living out his own life on his own theory. In fact, he was a polemic, not a saint. He soon found himself in difficulties. He had satisfied his own mind as to the inherent iniquity of the rule

Wicliffe.

of wicked popes and worldly bishops, by adopting the theory that the right to rule depended upon spiritual qualifications, not on official position. Soon afterwards he proceeded to emphasise his repudiation of the leadership of the official Church by denying the technical definition of the doctrine of Transubstantiation as laid down by the Lateran council of 1215. His objection to Transubstantiation was entirely to the technical use of the philosophical terms substance and accident in the official definition, and he constructed for himself a theory which was quite as speculative as the one he condemned. As it was not the official definition it laid him open to the technical charge of heresy. Meanwhile, his attacks on the wealth and position of the clergy had found a ready response among the people. At last the dumb mass who had suffered in silence so long had found a voice and a leader. Villeins and labourers could understand quickly enough the doctrine that bishops and abbots ought to be as poor as they. Many of Wicliffe's priests, not so much by his teaching as through his teaching, became simple communists and openly advocated the seizure of all property. The peasants' revolt of 1381 opened men's eyes to what was going on. The powerful and monied classes at once drew back from all patronage of a movement which promised to have such serious social and political results. Courtenay, archbishop of Canterbury, took advantage of Wicliffe's unguarded speculations to obtain his conviction as a heretic at a council held at Blackfriars in 1382, and to overthrow his influence at Oxford. Branded as a communist and a heretic Wicliffe was no longer dangerous to society or the Church, and was allowed to pass the rest of his days in peace at his country rectory of Lutterworth, without ever being called upon to retract his heresy. There he busied himself with the most important work of his life, the translation of the Bible into English. In its Latin translation—the Vulgate—the Bible had always been in the hands of the scholar; parts of it, such as the Gospels and Epistles, had been frequently translated into English since the days of Bede and Ælfred. Every person who could read was able in the Middle Ages to procure without

difficulty those parts of the Bible which were used in the Church services. But to Wicliffe England owes the first translation of the whole Bible, and the original of our present version, written in prose which by its nerve and strength has done much to fix for ever the genius of the English language.

Oddly enough, it was not in England but in Bohemia that the influence of Wicliffe as a theological writer was chiefly felt. Owing probably to the increased connection between England and Bohemia which followed the marriage of Richard II. to Anne of Bohemia, some of the writings of Wicliffe came under the notice of John Huss, and did much to colour the theology of that celebrated reformer. In this indirect sense only can Wicliffe be said to have influenced the Reformation of the sixteenth century. In England his theological opinions had no permanent effect. They died with him, or even before him. His views on Church government no doubt did much to inspire the party of the Lollards, who pushed to practical conclusions theories which he had advanced as academical arguments. But the Lollards were essentially not a party of Church reformers but of political revolutionaries. They were the Levellers of the Middle Ages—half fanatics, half communists—who saw, as they thought, all things around them going to rack and ruin, and struck wildly out on all sides in the belief that any change was better than no change at all. The Church was by no means the only institution which came in for their blows. They attacked her property, they denied some of her doctrines, but the lawyers and the traders came in equally for their share of abuse. They demanded that war—the profession of the upper classes—should be declared unchristian. Against men who wish to subvert the whole of society instead of improving it, society has always been quick to protect itself, and has not unfrequently used the first weapon which came to hand. So it was with the Lollards in the fifteenth century. It was easy to proceed against them as heretics, it was difficult to attack them as seditious or traitorous as long as they did not openly take up arms. The Lancastrian dynasty came to the throne in strict alliance with the clergy, and

The Lollards.

both king and bishops found it to their mutual advantage to suppress the troublesome sect which attacked the bases of society and questioned the bases of government.

So at the beginning of the fifteenth century a new horror made its appearance in English national life. Acts of Parliament blackened the statute-book which struck at men's political action through their religious opinions. From the statute *De Heretico Comburendo* in 1401 down to the 'Act for preventing the growth of Popery' passed under William III. in 1700, successive governments found religious persecution the simplest way of dealing with their political opponents. This is in its essence the nature of the proceedings taken against the Lollards. The Church did not prosecute them in order to preserve the technical purity of her doctrine from question, but she placed her machinery at the disposal of the State, in order to secure society and the government from threatened subversion. She was interested in the matter no less than they, but not so much in order to attain doctrinal uniformity as to avoid revolutionary chaos. But whatever the motive may have been, the results were equally lamentable. In 1401, while the statute *De Heretico* was before Parliament, Arundel the primate had brought about the burning of a Lollard named William Sawtre, in virtue of a writ from the king, after condemnation by Convocation. The statute itself provided that if after conviction in the ecclesiastical court a heretic refused to abjure his heresy, he was to be handed over to the sheriff to be burned. In the year 1414, after the attempted rebellion of Oldcastle, a still more stringent act was passed. The king's justices were empowered to search out offenders, and, having arrested them, to deliver them to the ordinary for trial, who, on conviction, would hand them back to the secular authority for execution. The object of the act was plainly the defence of the government—it was passed just after an attempt at rebellion—the procedure, except the trial itself, was entirely in the hands of the royal officers. This was the act under which the executions, both in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries took place. Probably the case of

Proceedings against heretics.

Sawtre in 1401, and of Bradby in 1410 were the only executions carried out on the initiative of the ecclesiastical authorities. But those carried out by the government under the act of 1414 certainly amounted to fifty, and may have been many more. As was usually the case, the large majority of the accused recanted and were imprisoned until purgation. It is needless to add that the penalty of death by burning, which seems so horrible to us, was not so considered at that cruel time. There is nothing perhaps in which public opinion has more changed in recent years than its dislike of cruelty of punishment. In days when, over the larger part of the world, torture was the recognised means by which governments obtained evidence, it was not wonderful that death by burning was the recognised penalty for sundry kinds of crime, of which heresy was one. It is more wonderful that it should have remained as the penalty prescribed by English law for the murder of a husband by a wife down to the year 1790.

The council of Constance, 1414-1418.

While the English Church was struggling with heresy and suppressing sedition at home, she was not unmindful of the claims made upon her by the western Church. In the year 1414 she was represented at the council of Constance by Hallam, bishop of Salisbury, and the bishops of Bath and Hereford. She took her part in putting an end to the great schism, and in asserting the superiority of general councils to the pope, which did so much to counteract the influence of the growing spirit of papal absolutism in the Church. But the immediate result of the restoration of the popes to something like their original position was the revival of their exactions and their administrative claims in a more imperious manner than ever. During the fourteenth century they had made their claim good to levy a tenth of ecclesiastical revenue from the clergy on reasonable cause being shown, though occasionally they met with a refusal. Since the time of John XXII. their demand for first-fruits, or a year's value of a bishopric or benefice, had been usually acquiesced in. Even in spite of the statutes of Provisors and Præmunire, they had been frequently able to appoint their own candidates to preferment of

all sorts by collusion with the king. But the lofty soul of Martin v. scorned such petty negotiations. On assuming the papal tiara he boldly appointed no less than thirteen English bishops by provision, made his nephew, a boy of fourteen, archdeacon of Canterbury, and wrote to the archbishops of Canterbury and York demanding that they should at once procure the repeal of the statutes of Provisors and Præmunire. Archbishop Chichele did what he could to satisfy the angry pope, but the Commons steadily refused to hear of any modification of the statutes. Chichele had to bear the brunt of the papal displeasure. Beaufort, bishop of Winchester, an ecclesiastical suffragan and political rival, was made a cardinal, and invested with the legatine authority, but he wisely never attempted to use it in England. Four years later pope Martin died, and his successors found it much better policy to let the famous anti-papal statutes rust in disuse rather than attempt to break them in pieces. In the troublous times which succeeded the accession of Henry VI. no candidate for the crown—Lancastrian, Yorkist, or Tudor—could afford to make an enemy of the pope, while the nation was too much occupied with its own grievances to pay attention to those of the clergy. As the century wore on, the statutes of Provisors and Præmunire became more and more of a dead letter. Papal claims became more and more acquiesced in by the nation and connived at by the king, and the popes never exercised so unquestioned an authority over the English Church as they did in the fifty years which preceded the overthrow of their power.

Claims of Martin V.

CHAPTER IX

THE INNER LIFE OF THE CHURCH IN THE MIDDLE AGES

It is always much more easy to know the public than the private life of an individual. Historians and chroniclers do not as a rule take notice of the ordinary facts of humdrum existence. The common to them is commonplace and unworthy of record. The same is true of institutions. It is easier to find out what Parliament has done than how it did it. It is easier far to gauge the influence of the Church in the public life of the world than to record her ordinary daily dealings with her own children. Yet it is by her power over the individual soul, by the discharge of her daily spiritual duties, by the use of her opportunities for making men better, that she must eventually be judged, both at the bar of history and at the tribunal of God. If, therefore, we would have a true picture of the Church in the Middle Ages, some attempt must be made to understand her organisation as a spiritual power, and inquire into her methods as a religious society, as well as to trace her outward growth, and estimate her influence upon the national life.

Diocesan organisation.

From the establishment of the see of Carlisle in 1133 down to the Reformation, England and Wales were divided for spiritual purposes into twenty-one dioceses, of which eighteen belonged to the province of Canterbury, and three to the province of York, containing in all, it is said, about 8000 parishes. Thus the whole of the country was mapped out into definite territorial districts, over which the Church placed and maintained a bishop as the centre and source of spiritual power and jurisdiction, and under him a number of parochial clergy, who were directly responsible for the spiritual care of all

baptized persons resident in their parishes. Thus, in the Middle Ages, as now, there was not a single Christian in any part of the country who had not the right to demand, at the hands of a definite officer of the Church, the religious privileges guaranteed by the Church to her children in accordance with her laws. To the bishop therefore appertained the government of the parochial clergy, and the enforcement of Church discipline over both clergy and laity, besides the special duties of his order such as the holding of confirmations and ordinations. To assist him in this somewhat arduous task he divided his diocese into archdeaconries, over each of which he appointed an archdeacon to be his disciplinary officer, whose special duty it was to find out and correct breaches of discipline which did not require the bishop's personal attention. To help him in the decision of questions of ecclesiastical law which might arise, he appointed a chancellor, who had generally received a special training in both the civil and canon law. Thus there gradually arose round the bishop a circle of officials, great and small, who lived upon the fees which they received for the discharge of their duties, and were in consequence constantly subject to the temptation to make business in order to increase their incomes.

Extent of dioceses.

Dioceses varied very considerably in size. In the south-east, those of Rochester, Canterbury, and Chichester covered a comparatively small area, though they were somewhat thickly populated. In the west, the great diocese of Exeter comprised all Devonshire and Cornwall. In the midlands, the see of Lichfield stretched from Coventry to Chester, the huge diocese of Lincoln extended from the Thames to the Humber, and that of York comprised the archdeaconry of Nottingham as well as the whole of the county of York. It was obvious that no one man, however strong and however zealous, could cope with the duties of dioceses so vast. Yet no suggestion seems ever to have been made by synod or bishop for an increase of the territorial episcopate. In fact, so far from being appalled at the greatness of their episcopal responsibilities, mediæval bishops apparently had little scruple in undertaking

additional duties. Under the system of papal provisions some English sees were usually held by foreigners who never set foot in England. From the days of Henry I. to the Reformation some were invariably held by ministers of the crown, who necessarily spent much of their time at court. In the fifteenth century it became usual to employ bishops frequently as ambassadors to foreign states. Nothing is more astonishing to modern minds than the absence of the sense of personal duty to their dioceses which is so conspicuous in the mediæval bishops. Nothing certainly was more injurious to the welfare of the Church. The important duties of confirmation and ordination were left to suffragans or assistant bishops, the government of the diocese fell largely to the archdeacons and officials of the bishop's court. The bishop himself was chiefly known to his diocese as a person for whose benefit rents were raised and dues exacted. The non-residence of bishops in their dioceses did more than anything else to create a rift between the bishops and their clergy, and to fan into a flame the growing discontent of the people with the existing Church system.

Discharge of episcopal duties.

Even the best of bishops seem to have been lamentably lax in the discharge of the most important of their religious duties, namely, the administration of confirmation, and the admission of candidates for Holy Orders. It was not the custom for them, as it is with modern bishops, to hold confirmations at definite places at definite times, but they administered it casually when they were travelling about their dioceses to those who presented themselves or were brought by their parents. Usually children were brought for confirmation as soon after baptism as the bishop could be procured. In that case, of course, there was no special preparation for the rite, but it is clear that either through the difficulty of reaching the bishop, or through neglect, the number of the unconfirmed was very large. A constitution of archbishop Peckham, passed in 1281, orders that because there are numberless cases of persons who have grown old without the grace of confirmation, none

1. Confirmation.

shall be admitted to Communion who is not confirmed, except at the point of death ; and a constitution of archbishop Reynolds, passed in 1322, provides that adults about to be confirmed shall make their confessions first, and receive the sacrament of confirmation fasting. This shows that cases of adult confirmation were by no means rare. In the matter of ordinations the laxity was far worse, and had much more serious effects. In theory, candidates for the several orders had to satisfy the bishop of their fitness before they were ordained, but in practice this seems to have been allowed to sink into little more than a form. There was no attempt whatever at any special religious training for candidates for orders, while the amount of learning required of them was not very large. Candidates for minor orders had to show that they could read and write, those for the subdiaconate, diaconate, and priesthood that they understood enough Latin to read their service-books, and to explain the Epistles and Gospels for the year. That they always reached even this moderate standard seems doubtful, since a constitution of archbishop Langton in 1222 especially commands the archdeacons to see that the priests can rightly pronounce the words of the canon of the mass, and understand the true meaning of them ; and a constitution of the legate Otho, approved at a synod held at S. Paul's in 1237, orders the keeping of registers containing the names of those to be ordained, 'because it is perilous to ordain senseless persons, bastards, irregular persons, illiterates, and foreigners,' and it is necessary to prevent rejected candidates from slipping in with the others and getting ordained unawares. That such a thing could be so common as to earn the notice of a papal legate, shows that the care taken by English bishops and their officials in the holding of ordinations left much to be desired. The number of persons ordained shows how very easy it was in the Middle Ages to be ordained. In 1370 bishop Courtenay admitted 374 persons to orders in one day at Exeter. In 1337 no less than 849 candidates were ordained in the diocese of Worcester. In the next year the numbers fell to 613. These figures are no doubt exceptionally

2. Ordination.

high, but there is no reason to think that the diocese of Worcester would produce in those days an abnormal crop of candidates. Taking 400, which is a very low estimate, as the average in that diocese, and Worcester as an average diocese, we have the extraordinary number of 8400 persons receiving orders in England every year in the fourteenth century. This is evidently impossible, and if the figures handed down are correct they can only be explained on the supposition that in some dioceses there were no ordinations at all.[1] It is true that about half of those ordained only took minor orders, and probably never performed or intended to perform any religious functions, but nevertheless they ranked as clergy in the eyes of the law, enjoyed their benefit of clergy, often held ecclesiastical preferments, and by their manner of life brought credit or discredit upon the Church.

The parish priests.

Next to the bishops, the most important part of the clerical estate were the parochial clergy, or, as they were sometimes called to distinguish them from the monks, the 'secular' priests. It is said that the parishes in England and Wales in the Middle Ages amounted to about 8000, and as a constitution of archbishop Langton provided that there should be three or four priests to every church with a large parish, we cannot put the whole number of parochial clergy down as less than ten or twelve thousand. They were drawn from nearly every class of society, except, perhaps, the higher nobility, who procured as a rule cathedral or official endowment for their clerical relations; but it would probably be found that the middle classes, such as the small land-owners and the well-to-do tradesmen, furnished the larger number. The benefices they held varied widely both in extent and in emolument. For as each parish was separately endowed by its own benefactors, the circumstances of one were quite different from those of another. As the tithe usually formed a large part of the endowment of most parishes,

[1] It seems that during part of the sixteenth century it was the habit of some bishops to ordain very seldom, and of others to do nearly all the work of ordination for the whole of England. Possibly this was a survival of an old mediæval practice.

there grew up in the course of the Middle Ages two great divisions among the parish clergy, namely, those of rectors and vicars. The rector was a priest in full possession of all the emoluments of the parish, including the tithe; the vicar was only the substitute of the rector and did not receive the tithe. The distinction grew up in this way. As the monastic system developed it became common for benefactors and founders of religious houses to endow them with benefices, in which case the monastery became the rector of the parish, took the tithe, and made itself responsible for the services in the parish church. This duty it usually fulfilled either by sending one of its own members to say mass, or by hiring the chance ministrations of some wandering priest. Thus a considerable number of the parishes of England were deprived of a resident parish priest, and the endowment which was originally given to maintain a resident incumbent went to swell the corporate revenue of a distant monastery. To remedy this abuse, archbishop Langton, following the rules laid down by the council of the Lateran held in 1215, ordered that in all parishes held by monasteries, vicarages should be established and endowed by a portion of the tithe and offerings, so that every parish should have a resident priest of its own. The proportion of the endowment assigned for the support of the vicar seems to have been about one-third of the whole. A similar arrangement was made when colleges, hospitals, and other secular foundations were endowed with benefices in the same way as monasteries had been. In fact, it may be said that in nearly every case where rectors were permanently non-resident in the Middle Ages, after the council of the Lateran, they were obliged to appoint vicars in their place, who were duly charged with the cure of souls, had full ecclesiastical authority over their parishioners, and were entitled to a reasonable proportion of the emoluments of the benefice for their support. Another class of vicars arose when, under the system of provisions, foreigners were appointed to English benefices, and when two or more benefices were held by one man in plurality; but in

Appointment of vicars.

Curates.

these cases the arrangement was only temporary, and the vicars really only curates-in-charge. Still, considering how many were the avenues open to non-residence in the Middle Ages, it is probable that at least half the resident parish priests of the English Church in the fifteenth century were either vicars or curates-in-charge.

The parochial clergy then in the Middle Ages, as now, were divided into rectors, vicars, and curates, and differed very considerably from one another in social position, learning, spiritual attainments, and emoluments. There was, as we have seen, no special training required before they were admitted as candidates for ordination, and the necessary minimum of knowledge exacted by the bishop's examination was not great. The best of them had had the moral and intellectual discipline of college life at the university, when college life was severe and hard. The worst had picked up a smattering of letters at the monastic or guild school. It was usual to take the four minor orders of ostiary, lector, exorcist, and acolyth together, but to allow a reasonable interval to elapse between the subdiaconate, diaconate, and priesthood. The promise of celibacy was made at the conferring of the subdiaconate. No one was ordained to one of the higher orders generally in order merely to become a deacon, but always, as now, to a particular title—that is, to some definite salaried position.

Having received full orders the young priest was competent to be intrusted with the care of a parish. When appointed a vicar, or perhaps in due time a rector, he found that his main duties were in church. The multifarious activities of modern life made no claim on the clergy of the Middle Ages. They were not required to be the chairmen of endless meetings, the organisers of parochial entertainments, the distributers of charity, the administrators of clubs or the writers of begging letters. They did not find themselves compelled to preach or give addresses four or five times a week. They had not even to spend much time in confirmation classes or communicant classes, still less in Bible readings. Even parochial visiting seems to have been little attended to except

Duties of the parish clergy.

by the Friars. The priest of the Middle Ages looked upon himself as essentially the priest of his people and the dispenser of the sacraments. He said the seven canonical hours daily in Church, and the lesser offices of the Blessed Virgin Mary. On Sundays and Holy Days after he had finished terce he said mass. Thrice in the year he heard the regular confessions of his parishioners and gave them Communion. He took the Communion to the sick when required. Four times in the year he instructed his people in the articles of the faith, the ten commandments, the seven works of mercy, the seven deadly sins, the seven virtues, and the seven sacraments. He had further to see that all the requisites for mass were provided by the parish, that everything was in its place for the varied celebrations of the ever changing year, and that all the furniture and ornaments of the church were properly kept. Such seems to have been the minimum of duties imposed upon the parish priest by law, but then as now there were few who were content with the minimum. Probably, except under very peculiar circumstances, mass was said every day in all parish churches. In town churches there would no doubt be many daily masses in connection with local societies and festivities, and with the commemoration of the departed. Even in country districts it is likely that there were few parish priests who did not hold some sort of school for the children and communicant classes for adults, and still fewer parishes where there were not an appreciable number of penitents who wished to make their confessions more frequently than at the stated times. It must further be remembered how much more difficult all clerical ministrations must have been when roads were few, paths ill kept, and artificial light very expensive.

To judge from the disciplinary laws passed with regard to the parochial clergy, the main charge that can be brought against them is that of concubinage. When celibacy was enforced by ecclesiastical authority, marriage became sin, and wives, in the eye of the Church, concubines. There can be no doubt at all that marriage of this questionable sort was very largely prevalen

Failings of th parish clergy. 1. Clerical marriage.

among the parochial clergy of England during the Middle Ages. Legislation against concubinary priests is very common, and it must be remembered that every priest who took a wife after the time of archbishop Lanfranc knew that he was doing what the Church denounced as a sin and the laity knew to be contrary to his ordination pledges. Whatever views we may hold in the abstract as to the advantages or disadvantages of clerical celibacy, there can be no doubt that for a parish priest to be deliberately living a life contrary to the laws of the Church and his own solemn pledges must have had a most deteriorating effect, both upon his own character and his religious influence upon others. At the same time there is no reason to think that the English clergy ever sank to the state of moral corruption which was common enough on the continent in the fifteenth century. The bishops and higher clergy were remarkably free from all scandal of that nature, and what coarse vice there was seems to have chiefly skulked among some of the smaller monasteries and to have been found in the less civilised parts of the country.

2. Simony.

In days when many of the clergy were very poor, and when all officials, both of the king and the Church, exacted fees for everything which they did, it was a great temptation to the parish priest to sell the sacraments. Three times in the twelfth century legislation against it is repeated, but in 1237 the practice is spoken of in the legatine constitutions of Otho with such horror as to suggest that by that time it had ceased to be common. In the next centuries the subject does not appear to be mentioned, perhaps because in many cases offerings had become so customary as to render the demand for a fee unnecessary. Sometimes the failings of the parish priest seem rather to have been those which arise from wealth than poverty. He showed a great tendency in the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries to become vain and smart, to grow his hair long and his coat short, to wear a sword, and make himself undistinguishable from a layman. Sometimes he seems so far to have forgotten

3. Worldliness.

himself as to take part in drinking matches at inns; but there is a notable improvement in the sobriety of the clergy after the Norman Conquest to what had been the case before. On the whole, from the scanty light which we have to guide us, from the paucity of mention of serious offences in the disciplinary canons, except in the matter of clerical marriage, from the undoubtedly high character for devotion which England possessed in Europe, from the high-minded and patriotic action usually taken by the clergy in political matters, from the continued attachment of the laity even through the fifteenth century as shown in the enlargement and enrichment of so many parish churches, from the multiplication of books of devotion and manuals of prayer, we may fairly conclude that the parish clergy of England in the Middle Ages were just as much superior to the standard of their age as it is right to expect clergy to be. If some of them sank into self-indulgence and some into vice, some rose to unquestionable saintship, many to acknowledged nobility of life, and it is worth notice that it is among the ranks of the parochial clergy that Chaucer finds the most attractive and religious of his characters.

Their high character on the whole.

Ranking as secular clergy, but not so important as either the bishops or the parochial clergy, came the small but dignified body of canons and prebendaries. During the passion for monasticism which spread over England in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, a great number of the old English secular foundations for deans and chapters had been turned into monasteries, but even at that time the majority of the cathedrals were under secular government. In the thirteenth century the tide turned and secular foundations became once more fashionable. Besides the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, which were somewhat exceptional in their nature, a considerable number of capitular foundations, large and small, grew up all over the country. The idea of a 'secular' foundation was that of a body living a common life, under rule, in the world, that of a 'regular' foundation of a body living a common life, under

The capitular clergy.

vows, apart from the world. The former therefore was very much more pliant and elastic. The rule differed in different places and was embodied in statutes. By these the government of the church was placed in the hands of the dean and chapter, who met at stated intervals in chapter to transact business. Every day they met in church to say the canonical hours and to hear the chapter mass. Often they dined together in a common hall. In the case of some cathedrals there were special endowments, commonly the tithe of some parish in the diocese, for the members of the chapter, called prebends; and attached to each prebend certain rights of precedence and preaching in the cathedral itself. Sometimes there was also a special foundation for the support of the choir and the priests who took part with the choir, which made them a corporation within a corporation, and gave them certain rights and privileges. But from the most complicated cathedral constitution, such as London or York or Lincoln, down to the most simple college of priests settled in a country town, the same essential features of a secular foundation were always to be found—namely, the common religious life of a number of men, usually priests, under a common rule, without vows.

The capitular clergy were not homogeneous enough as a body to play an important part in Church history. They were usually connected with the upper rather than the lower strata of society. The pope made great efforts to obtain the patronage of cathedral prebends, but succeeded indifferently. More frequently they came under the power of the king, and were heaped indiscriminately on to the heads of the clerical scions of noble families. They kept up as far as they could a perpetual warfare with their bishops, and strenuously disputed his efforts to 'visit' them. By the help of the pope, however, in the thirteenth century bishop Grosseteste succeeded in establishing and enforcing his right of visiting the cathedral and chapter of Lincoln. From that time the interest in the question became purely academic, and it was agreed as a matter of practice that the dean and canons of a collegiate church had the right of

correcting their subordinates, but the bishop that of seeing that they did their duty in this respect.

Below the ranks of the parochial clergy came a large class of men whose existence forms the real blot upon the mediæval Church. They were the stipendiary or chantry priests, men who were ordained as chaplains to a chantry or chapel to which was attached a small stipend for the saying of mass for the repose of the soul of the benefactor or his relatives. They had, therefore, no parochial functions or responsibilities. They were deprived of the great assistance which the guidance of other souls necessarily renders to the parish priest in the training of his own. They were miserably poor, sprung usually from the lower classes, without learning, without training, without employment, and obliged to profess celibacy. What wonder if their ecclesiastical duties tended to become the merest routine, and their moral character sadly deteriorated? Among them and the worst of the friars were recruited the greedy and shameless crew of pardoners, whose doings fill so many pages of the satirists and novelists of the day. Yet beyond question they owed their existence to a vein of conviction and feeling which ran very deep in the religious life of the Middle Ages. Every cathedral and monastery and parish church was full of altars and shrines and chapels used for the commemoration of departed souls. Many a foundation was due to the intense longing of the founder that men should remember him in intercession before God after he was gone. Far more were due to the love of husbands and wives and relatives which lasted beyond the grave. He reads the life of the Middle Ages very wrong who ascribes all this to the selfish desire of avoiding the vulgar horrors of a materialised purgatory. Rather is its root to be found in that great sense of unity in the Church which is the central principle of mediæval religion, a unity of interest and of love which by intercessory mass and commemorative prayer overleaped the artificial barriers of the grave, and asserted its claim alike over suffering souls in purgatory and glorified souls in Paradise. It is the

The chantry priests.

The mediæval doctrine of the future state.

keynote of Dante's great poem, the truest representation perhaps that we have of mediæval religious thought. *Corruptio optimi pessima.* It was devilish work indeed to mar so true an expression of tender far-reaching love, to turn astray humility so noble and so hopeful—but it was done. The commemorative mass sank into a mechanical function. The chantry priest became the scandal of his order. In his vulgar and itching hands the doctrine of the future state was degraded, until to the simple and ignorant it was pictured as a mere arithmetical arrangement of so many masses said and paid for, and so many years of punishment remitted. By the opening years of the sixteenth century round the doctrine of the future state had grown up the most touching and solemn of teaching, and the most vulgar and shameless of abuses.[1]

The monks.

The secular clergy, capitular and parochial, always must form the backbone of the Church, but in the Middle Ages the monks were hardly less important. The essence of monasticism lies in the consecration of the monk wholly to the service of God apart from the world in disciplined life, under vows. No compromise is possible. The world with all its ambitions, its pleasures, its honours, its wealth is put absolutely on one side. When the monk enters his cloister he bids farewell for ever to the world and dedicates himself

[1] The thought of the western Church on the doctrine of the future state is nowhere more beautifully expressed than by cardinal Newman in *The Dream of Gerontius*, especially where he describes the desire for purification felt by the 'happy suffering soul' itself, 'consumed yet quickened by the glance of God.'

Take me away, and in the lowest deep
There let me be,
And there in hope the lone night watches keep
Told out for me.
There motionless and happy in my pain
Lone, not forlorn—
There will I sing my sad perpetual strain
Until the morn,
There will I sing my absent Lord and Love.
Take me away,
That sooner I may rise and go above,
And see Him in the truth of everlasting day.

wholly to his vocation. A monk's business, therefore, was the serving of God—that was what he was a monk for. It is true that according to the rules of some orders the service of God was to be carried out in the improvement of man, or even of nature. Study, education, agriculture, forestry, were recommended to different orders of monks in their rules, and were practised by them to the signal advantage of mankind, but that was not the reason why they became monks. Men became monks to serve God perfectly, and they wrote in the scriptorium, taught in the cloister, or dug in the fields, because by doing so they could serve God better. This is why the monastic life has been often called selfish. It is said to be based on the selfish care of a man for his own soul. To say this is to misunderstand the theory of the division of labour in the Catholic Church. Some were called to do the work of God in the world, some to do the work of God apart from the world. All were bound together in the spiritual society, and each helped the other in his own vocation. The constant intercession and remembrance of the monk availed for the souls of the soldier and the farmer, as the sword of the soldier and the toil of the farmer defended and secured the life and temporal sustenance of the monk. The monk kneeling before the altar in his church was no more engaged selfishly in the care of his own soul than was Moses on the hill at Rephidim. To mediæval faith the spiritual kingdom was just as vivid a reality as the temporal kingdom, and the soldiers of the one just as necessary as the soldiers of the other.

Nature of monasticism
1. Its self-consecration.

2. Intercession.

Yet in the rough hard days of the eleventh century, when monasticism grew to be the vivifying power of the western Church, men did undoubtedly feel the impossibility of the task of serving God aright in the world. In days when the profession of arms was the only profession of the free born, when manual labour in the fields still bore upon it the stigma of the slave, when cruelty and oppression and outrage were the habitual accompaniment of war, which

3. Seclusion.

itself was the constant occupation of all but the clerk and the villein, religious men not unnaturally longed for the quiet and peace of the cloister in order to prepare their souls for death. 'In obeying thee I have too much neglected God and myself,' said Herlwin, the Norman, to his lord. 'Let me pass what remains of my life in a monastery.' Kings and nobles, who from family cares or pressure of business were unable to follow the example of Herlwin and retire from the world themselves, became the founders of monasteries in the hope that the perpetual remembrance and intercession of their grateful children might avail for the welfare of their race at the bar of eternal mercy.

Such was the spirit of mediæval monasticism. The monk was to be the foremost soldier of the kingdom of God, the leader of religious zeal and devotion. So much was he to be the salt of the Church that when a man became a monk he was said to '*enter religion*,' and he was formally known as '*a religious*.' But religious leadership in mediæval thought implied severity of discipline and constant self-mortification. The ascetic type of Christianity recommended itself to the earlier Middle Ages as the highest type, and each successive Church reformer based his reform on stricter discipline and greater austerity. Order succeeded order with great rapidity, and each successive order embraced a severer rule, involved a greater self-renunciation. In England there was but one order of purely native growth—the Gilbertine—and that had no great success; but all the important developments which took place in monasticism abroad quickly took root in this country.

4. Discipline.

The order of S. Benedict.

The original rule of S. Benedict of Nursia was introduced into England by Benedict Biscop and Wilfrid in the seventh century, but it never took hold on English monasticism till the time of S. Dunstan, when it was imported from the French monastery of Fleury by archbishop Odo, and quickly made its way over England. By the time of the Norman Conquest most English monasteries had already adopted the rule of S. Benedict. If there were any which had not they were compelled to do so by a constitution of archbishop Lanfranc in 1075. Most of the houses

founded in the following century were of the same rule; and it may be said that throughout the Middle Ages the greater number and the most important of the religious houses of England followed the simple rule of S. Benedict, with some local variations which were finally reduced to uniformity in the thirteenth century.

The Cluniacs.

In the year 910 the monastery of Clugny in Burgundy was founded, which represented the first great reform of the Benedictine order. By its high standard of life and the severity of its rule it quickly attracted all that was best and noblest in the western Church. In the twelfth century Clugny had no less than two thousand daughter houses. It had given Hildebrand to the Church. Its abbot held a position in Christendom only second to that of the pope. In England the Cluniacs were introduced by William of Warren and his wife, who founded the priory of Lewes for them in 1077. But probably because the houses of the Cluniac order were all priories, *i.e.* inferior houses, dependent in all things upon the mother house of Clugny, they did not flourish in the independent air of England. Some fifteen houses in all with their dependent cells existed at the time of the dissolution. In the year 1098 Stephen Harding, an Englishman, scandalised by what he considered the pomp and luxury of Clugny, founded at Citeaux in Burgundy a house of a far stricter type. Simplicity, even to meanness, was to be the mark of the Cistercian wherever he went. Not even on his church or its furniture, much less on his house or himself, was anything costly allowed. Bare walls, plain ritual, coarse dress, simple music, humble ornaments, common food were to be the proofs of the absolute renunciation of the pomps and vanities of life. The Cistercian fled far away from the haunts of man to the clearing of the forest or the edge of the moor. There, in battle with the wildness of nature, in the severity of an ascetic rule, he fought out his salvation, like the hermit saints of old, on the rocks of the sea or the marsh of the river. The order soon became popular in England. It encouraged the breeding of sheep, and grew rich on the profits of the wool trade. Many famous houses owned

The Cistercians.

its rule. Through the beauty of the ruins of some of them, such as Tintern, and Fountains, and Rievaulx, a tenderer feeling still lurks among Englishmen with regard to the Cistercians than any other order of mediæval monks commands.

The Carthusians.

A few years before the foundation of Citeaux by Harding, S. Bruno had pushed the doctrine of self-renunciation to its fullest development in his foundation of the Chartreuse. The Carthusian rule, like those of Clugny and Citeaux, was in form a variation of that of S. Benedict. In reality its principle was quite different. It sought not to discipline but to crush out all parts of man's nature except the religious. A Carthusian lived his life in absolute silence and in solitary confinement. He met his brethren only in church and in chapter. The one daily meal which his rule allowed him was consumed by him in the solitude of his cell. Under such circumstances he reached the perfection of the monkish ideal in complete separation from the world, and in complete self-dedication to contemplative religion. How far the very success of these principles did not defeat their own objects and turn living and thinking men into praying machines may be a question. The Carthusian rule, at any rate, was found too severe for the full-blooded Englishmen. Only about ten or twelve Charter-houses sprang up on English soil, although the earliest of them, the priory of Witham, founded by Henry II. in 1182, attained great celebrity through its first prior, the saintly and statesmanlike Hugh of Avalon, afterwards bishop of Lincoln.

The canons of S. Augustine.

In the middle of the twelfth century William of Corbeil introduced into England the order of canons regular of S. Augustine, usually known as black or Austin canons. In spite of the name canons they were in fact monks, and obeyed a rule which was very similar to that of S. Benedict, and was said to be based upon the writings of S. Augustine. They soon became very popular in England, threw off offshoots called the Præmonstratensian canons and the Sempringham or Gilbertine canons, and at the time of the dissolution numbered some 175 houses. Under the influence of the Crusades a still

further development was seen in the religious life. Military orders, like the knights of the Temple, whose business it was to defend the Holy Sepulchre from the infidel, and the knights Hospitaller of S. John of Jerusalem, who protected the sick and the dying of the crusading hosts, were founded in the east and soon spread into England. Commanderies and preceptories, as their houses were called, sprang up in most large towns in the thirteenth century, as the witness of the advance of the chivalrous idea and the proof of crusading zeal.

The military orders.

Thus from the Norman Conquest to the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII. the monks played a very large part in the religious life of England. They were spread all over the country, in the remote valleys of Wales and Yorkshire, amid the marshes of the fenland, as in the combes of Devonshire or the weald of Sussex. There was hardly a district in England where their influence was unknown and their power unfelt. From the first that influence and that power, as it affected the outside world, was of a mixed character. From the very nature of things they could not help forming an *imperium in imperio*. They had as a collection of orders, separate from the rest of mankind, interests different from those of the Church at large. They had, as separate communities, interests rival to those of one another. They laid stress upon the differences between them and the rest of the Church. They arrogated to themselves the distinctive title of '*religious*.' They looked at every question which arose from the standpoint of their own interests. To their historians and chroniclers an opponent of monasticism seems like a second Judas. They were always in search of special immunities and distinctive privileges. They attached themselves to the pope, because it was from him that such privileges could most easily be gained. They opposed themselves to the local episcopate, for in the bishops they recognised the obvious enemies of their independence. The abbots of the larger monasteries set themselves up as rivals to the bishop. They claimed to exercise, under the pope, the exclusive right of

Importance of the monks.

Their exclusiveness.

Their rivalry with the episcopate.

jurisdiction over the members of their own houses. They obtained from the pope the privilege of wearing a mitre and using the episcopal vestments in their own churches. The wearing of the episcopal dress was a harmless vanity. Exemption from episcopal control soon became a serious evil. Of all monastic claims it was the most strenuously asserted, of all monastic privileges it was the most dearly cherished. Some orders, such as the Cistercian monks, the Præmonstratensian and Gilbertine canons, the knights of the Temple and of S. John of Jerusalem, obtained it as an immunity attaching to the whole order. The Benedictine monasteries had to obtain it one by one. The abbey of S. Albans and the abbey of S. Martin in the place of Battle dispute for the ill-omened honour of being the first successfully to obtain their independence. S. Augustine and Christ Church Canterbury did not lag long behind, and many others followed in their train. By the fourteenth century, although the greater number of the religious houses in England were still subject to the visitatorial power of the bishop, the largest and most important of them were free from all control on his part, and only subject to the supreme but capricious discipline of the pope.

Their claims of exemption.

Yet it would be a mistake to suppose that the deterioration of discipline, observable in the monasteries towards the end of the Middle Ages, was largely due to the want of episcopal supervision. By far the larger number of religious houses were duly visited by the bishop once in seven years. The exempt houses were, from time to time, visited by papal visitors. A serious scandal which occurred in an exempt monastery would not be dealt with so soon as in an ordinary monastery. It took longer for the more remote disciplinary machinery to get under weigh; but in the course of time it was dealt with and dealt with effectually. But scandals of this nature were happily rare. The failure of the monasteries was not that they became hotbeds of vice, as is frequently assumed, but that they ceased to be models of lofty and stern religious life. Against failure to maintain the highest standard of self-consecration the letter of the law and the admini-

stration of discipline are powerless. They may force a monk into church. They cannot make him pray when he is there.

Even in the luxurious fifteenth century the life of a monk was not a lazy one. Winter and summer he rose between five and six, washed on the cold stones of the open lavatory, and took his place in choir at six o'clock. There he said matins and prime, and the corresponding hours of the Blessed Virgin, and heard mass. After mass was finished came on chapter days the meeting in chapter, then breakfast, followed by terce in church, and, if the day was one of special obligation, the high mass at which the monastery servants and the neighbouring villagers attended. Afterwards came the temporal business of the day. Each monk had his special work to do. Some taught or learned in the draughty cloister. Some kept in the scriptorium the elaborate accounts of the receipts and expenditure of the monastery, or wrote, from the accounts of passing travellers and the letters which they received from other houses of their rule, the chronicle of contemporary events. Some still more learned and artistic copied in beautiful handwriting the service books used in the church, or books of public offices, and private devotion, or portions of the Bible, for the use of the laity. Some attended to the sick in the infirmary, some to the horses and mules in the stable, some to the storage and dispensing of the food and drink required by so numerous a community. Some rode off, at the abbot's request, to the neighbouring estates to collect arrears of tithe or dues, or, perhaps, to inquire into a dispute between the monastery tenants. All, unless they had received a dispensation, were expected to assemble in church for the offices of sext, nones, vespers, and compline, and in the refectory for their mid-day and evening meals, which they ate in silence while one of the brethren read passages from the writings of the fathers or the lives of the saints. Compline over, they retired to rest in the common dormitory. It was a life of regularity and of discipline, but not of privation. Food was plentiful though simple, for the stories of luxurious living which have come down to us seem to

Their life in the monastery.

refer solely to the chief officers of the monastery and not to the brethren at large. Cloister, church, and dormitory were solidly built; the habit, though coarse, was well woven and warm. Cold was the chief hardship which a mediæval monk had to endure. It is difficult for us, accustomed as we are to coal fires and heating food, even to imagine the intense cold of the bare dormitory and the wind-swept cloister where the monks spent so much of their time. But it was a hardship shared equally by the baron in his castle and even the king in his palace, and was no doubt much less felt by our grimy and thick-skinned ancestors than by their softer and cleaner descendants.

Their patriotism.

The somewhat narrow corporate feeling engendered by monastic life impaired the usefulness of monasticism as an institution in the country. On the other hand it intensified the devotion of a monk to his order and his house. To every zealous monk his order was the most important thing in the world and his monastery the most important thing in his order. All resources were freely lavished to make the monastery as perfect as could be. The church was planned and carried out on a vast scale because it was to be the pattern church of the neighbourhood. The ornaments and vestments, the candles, the embroideries, the organs were of the richest and the best, because it was there that God was to be worshipped in fullest splendour. In the midst of the multifarious business transactions of the monastery, the chronicle of the time was carefully kept in the scriptorium, because by that very chronicle after-ages were to learn the greatness of the house and the fortunes of its friends. The monasteries sprang up all over England with a life of their own, concentrated and exclusive, but rich and vigorous, bringing into the stagnant waters of rural society a profusion of high thoughts and noble aspirations previously inconceivable. Art, worship, devotion, learning, often in the highest form at that time attainable, were brought to a man's very doors. If he had in him anything which would correspond to their magnetic touch, and would submit itself to the chastening of discipline, the open portals of the nearest monastery set

him upon the lowest rung of a ladder which would lead, did he choose it, to heaven.

Monasticism and wealth are incompatible. As the monasteries grew rich they deteriorated. Benefactors showered possessions upon them unthinkingly—tithes of churches, rights of market, tolls, and land. Before long they became the owners of a third of the tithe, and about a third of the land of England. At first the evil was felt by the parishes, not the monasteries; for the monasteries absorbed the larger part of the emolument of the parish priest, and the parishes had to put up with an inferior vicar, usually a man just ordained priest. On the other hand, the monasteries while they were building their churches, collecting manuscripts, making roads and bridges, erecting mills and farm-houses and barns, had plenty to do with their money, and did not experience the evils of wealth. But before long the time came when the large landed estates of the monasteries affected them in two ways. The business of managing their property and houses took up most of the time and thought of the chief officials of the monastery. The abbot combined in his own person much of the work of the modern land-agent and family solicitor. He was perpetually engaged in vindicating the rights of his monastery and settling its business affairs. The prior was like the dean of a large Oxford college. The chief monks of a large house ceased to attempt to be spiritual leaders, they became good men of business, and that not so much because a lowered ideal of monasticism no longer called for religious zeal, as because the worldly duties connected with the monastic property were so engrossing as to leave neither time nor opportunity for anything else. God was elbowed out by Mammon. Again, the increasing income of the monastery tended inevitably to increase the standard of comfort, and attract men of less power of self-discipline into the order, and so to impair the asceticism of the life. Monks ceased to be men living a life of greater austerity and truer devotion than the rest of the world. They ceased to be men living a life of cloistered seclusion apart from the world. On the contrary, they lived in as

Their deterioration through wealth.

good houses, enjoyed as great comfort, and mixed as much in the affairs of life as the majority of simple God-fearing men. That they sank as a body below that standard appears unlikely, and is certainly not proved. Some monasteries no doubt fell into vicious ways from bad management, as did S. Alban's in the fifteenth century. Some monks, no doubt, brought scandal upon their order, especially those who had been expelled or had fled from their monasteries. Such men form the natural food for the satirist at all times and in all climates. That there was wide and general laxity in the matter of the observance of the rule is probable. That an easy-going standard of respectable life had supplanted the high ideal of consecrated life common to the earlier centuries is no doubt true. But no evidence has yet been produced sufficient to sustain a charge of deep and wide-spread corruption, while it is certain that scandals, when they were found to exist, were effectively dealt with by ecclesiastical authority.

Towards the middle of the thirteenth century a new and stirring power made its appearance in the Church of England.

The Friars.

Nothing could be more opposed than the ideal of the religious life adopted by the monk and the friar. The monk withdrew from the world, the friar plunged into its busiest haunts. The monk aimed at affecting mankind from above by the perfection of his own spiritual life, by the weapons of prayer and intercession; the friar went as a missionary among men, pleading, persuading, compelling all to come in. The very essence of the friar's work was the belief in the brotherhood of man, the sense of the oneness of redeemed mankind in Christ. It was that which led him to settle in the most crowded streets, to tend the most loathsome diseases, to live on the chance alms of the charitable, to mix with the people at fair and at market, to speak their own homely tongue, to live their own simple life, to exchange with them rude jest and honest laugh, to become the welcome companion and the trusted confidant of the populace. It was a new experience in the Church—this order of men, many of them sprung from the higher classes, who refused

the companionship of the great and powerful, who rejected all offers of wealth, and of their own accord plunged among the poor and the ignorant and the degraded, and chose a life as hard as that of those to whom they ministered. Men recognised quickly the nobility of the ideal, they responded to the greatness of the love. The friars carried all before them. They received from the pope special privileges of hearing confessions and celebrating mass. Introduced into England early in the reign of Henry III., before the century was out they were the most conspicuous force in the Church. They were the first mission clergy whom England had seen since its conversion. They were not content, like the parish priests, with giving the sacraments to those who asked for them. Their business was to make men ask for them. Wherever people were wont to gather over the length and breadth of the land—at fair, at market, at joust, at morrice dance, at pilgrimage, at village festival, there was the friar to be found preaching in homely and telling fashion, stirring up again the dulled religious instinct, bringing back to confession and Communion the lapsed and the indifferent. The true and deep revival of personal religion all over Europe in the thirteenth century is in the main the work of the friars.

Roughly speaking, they were divided into two bodies—the Friars Preachers, or Dominicans, and the Friars Minor or Franciscans. S. Dominic designed his order of Black Friars especially for the task of maintaining and teaching the faith. They were to be theologians and preachers. As watchdogs of the Lord[1] (*Domini canes*) they were to defend His fold the Church, and drive off the destroying wolf. Poverty was no part of their original constitution, and, indeed, was almost incompatible with their success. It was borrowed in admiration of the Franciscans. To S. Francis of Assisi poverty was the very essence of the life of his order. To possess nothing, but to live on alms like our Lord, was his ideal. Intellectual pursuits were regarded by him as dangerous.

The Dominicans.

The Franciscans.

[1] Visitors to Florence will remember the fresco attributed to Simon Memmi on the wall of the Spanish Chapel of the great Dominican church of S. Maria Novella.

The first of the Grey Friars were allowed to possess no book but their breviary. He always discouraged speculation on matters of faith. Thus from the first there was a great difference of function between the two orders of friars. The Dominicans as a rule settled in important centres such as the universities, and addressed themselves to the educated. The Franciscans devoted themselves to the people. But soon a bitter rivalry sprang up between them. The Franciscans, disregarding the wishes of their founder, procured permission to hold property in common, and applied themselves to study. In the fourteenth century they captured Oxford and produced a succession of famous thinkers, among whom were Roger Bacon, William Occam, and Duns Scotus, and dared to dispute with the Dominicans of Paris for the leadership of thought.

As men like these rose to be powerful, the humbler members sank into decay. The first friars lived on alms, their successors lived by begging. The difference exactly explains the extent of the deterioration and its cause. The profession of a friar, instead of being the voluntary renunciation of every worldly hindrance to spiritual work, became the easiest way in which a lazy vagabond could get food and drink. The worthless person, who nowadays spends the summer on the tramp and the winter in the workhouse, would in the Middle Ages have donned a friar's frock, and extorted his dinner from a superstitious housewife by the threat of his curse, or wheedled it out of her by his gossiping flattery. All writers of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries agree in depicting the friar as a compound of mendacity, of cunning, of shamelessness, and of vice. The humanist of the fifteenth century finds in them the type of ignorance. By that time they seem to have lost their hold upon the universities, and ceased to produce even students. Saints they had ceased to produce long ago when they became mendicants. But probably throughout their long history, from the fourteenth century to the present day, there has been no order of men in which greater contrasts have at all times been observable, and the corruption which has

Their deterioration.

overtaken them has been much worse among the Franciscans than among the Dominicans.

The hold which the Church maintained over the minds and conduct of the laity was no less assured than that which she exerted over the clergy. Men lived in the Middle Ages under a great sense of the claims of the Christian Society upon them. Their allegiance to the Church was as real a principle of their lives as their allegiance to their feudal lord. Motives of self-interest, of passion, of ambition and the like, might make them rebel against the one as against the other. A Rufus might declare war against God, a John cynically break every ordinance of the Church, but neither disputed the fact of their sonship, though they repudiated its obligations. Hence, however vicious a life a man might lead, however much he might pose as the enemy of God and the curse of man, the way of reformation, the gate of penitence, was always open to him. He had not to change his attitude of mind, he had only to change his mode of life. The worst of men was still a son of the Church, and acknowledged himself to be so. Very few even among the worst wholly repudiated their religious duties. If the voice of conscience only sounded in their ears they knew at once how to follow its guidance. Great sinners easily turned into great saints. They had not to learn what religion was. They had only to act according to their convictions, to obey claims which they recognised.

Attitude of the laity to the Church.

It is this which makes the great difference in the attitude of the laity to religion in the Middle Ages and in subsequent centuries. The indifference and irresolution which is born from the jarring claims of competing religious and irreligious belief did not exist. A man was not called upon to choose between a hundred different systems of religion or morality. He never found himself in the common mental state of thinking them all equally defective. Religion was one and indivisible. It was Christianity, and Christianity was the Catholic Church, and the Catholic Church presented itself to each man as an orderly authoritative system of belief and practice, which encompassed

him throughout life, and claimed to guide him through eternity. All he had to do was to fashion his life in accordance with its rules. This he did, for although there were plenty of heresies in the Middle Ages, assertions of independence of thought or practice, they were of the nature of local rebellions against some particular part of the Church system, not the organisation of a rival system.

Religion, then, in the Middle Ages played a larger part in man's life than it does now. It was entwined with his every action public and private. It took hold of him when born, brought him as a baby to baptism, to confirmation in childhood. As a boy he learned the rudiments of the faith at the monastery school, and if he was clever a tincture of Latinity. When he came to years of understanding he was prepared by his parish priest for his first confession and Communion, and afterwards made his confession and received the Holy Communion regularly at the three great festivals at least. On Sundays and Holy Days he heard mass at his parish church. Was he a townsman and a member of the guild of his craft or his calling, he was admitted with religious ceremonies, he attended the chapel where stood the guild altar on stated occasions to hear mass for the guild. Was he nobly born, he watched all night before his armour in church and received the Holy Communion in the morning, before he was girt with his knightly sword. Gentle or simple, he abstained from flesh meat on Fridays, fasted during the forty days of Lent, and on Ember days and the vigils of Holy Days. He placed himself under the special care of a patron saint, usually his name saint, and commended himself to the protection of God, our Lady, and his patron saint when he rose in the morning, went to bed at night, or undertook any important work. If he was rich, he founded a chantry where mass might be daily said for the repose of his soul; if he was poor, he scraped together a few shillings to discharge his funeral expenses, and pay a stipendiary priest something to remember him with his benefactor at the altar when he said his commemorative mass.

Importance of religion in a man's life.

His public religious duties.

Probably once in his life he went on pilgrimage, not, unless he was rich and leisured, to the tombs of the Apostles in Rome, but more usually to the shrine of S. Thomas at Canterbury, or to the relics of our Lady at Walsingham. A pilgrimage in the fifteenth century combined the attractions of a religious function and a personally conducted tour. The roads to a noted place of pilgrimage like Canterbury were well kept and in good order; large and well-managed inns provided ample accommodation for man and beast. Time was of no particular object. Well-to-do people rode leisurely along in the fine summer days through the green lanes, and over the sharp chalk ridges of southern England, making fresh friends at every halting-place, hearing all the last gossip of the court, discussing all the wonders of the last miracle, with greater enjoyment of life and less inconvenience than falls to the lot of the modern traveller, as he rushes to Venice and to Naples amid the dust and the dirt of an express train. Arrived at Canterbury, his religious imagination could not fail to be struck with the beauty of the cathedral and the monasteries, the richness of the wonderful shrine, the throngs of pilgrims of every class and of many tongues—all enthusiastic, all for the time at least devout. He returned to his farm or his shop with his mind more enlarged, his sympathies more widened, and his religious aspirations more stirred, than when he issued forth from home a few weeks ago with a mind chiefly filled with the excitement of a new pleasure.

His pilgrimage.

For those who felt called to live a life of more devotion and sacrifice, the Church had something more to offer still. Religious confraternities for the relief of the poor, the nursing of the sick, and the burial of the dead existed in every town. The third order of S. Francis, when the friars were at their best, encouraged numbers of men and women to live in the world under the protection of a strict rule of personal religion. The large numbers of the clergy enabled much more attention to be given to the wants of each individual soul than is possible nowadays, except in religious communities.

His works of mercy.

Careful personal teaching and direction to a great extent took the place now filled by books of instruction. For those who could not read, rhyming paraphrases in English, to be committed to memory, were largely used. The Creed and the Lord's prayer, the story of the Passion, the ten commandments and the seven deadly sins, the calendar of the principal festivals and fasts, were thus learned by heart by the ignorant. For the more learned who could read, and the rich who could buy, there was no lack of books in English procurable to enable the worshipper to understand and follow the complicated services in church, and assist his private devotions. Portions of the Bible, books containing the epistles and gospels used at mass, books of the Canonical Hours, or the Hours of the Blessed Virgin, Te Deum and Benedicite, Litanies in English, versions of the Lord's prayer, directions how to prepare for confession, prayers said to have been used by saints, all belonging to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, are still extant in our libraries, and some of them common enough still in booksellers' shops.

His private instruction.

The Primers which were in the hands of every educated man and woman in the fourteenth or fifteenth century, answered to no small extent to our present book of Common Prayer. They contained the offices said daily in Church, the seven penitential psalms and the fifteen gradual psalms, the litany and the offices for the departed as well as the Lord's prayer, the Creed, the ten commandments and the seven deadly sins. Thus the Church in the Middle Ages, teaching her children either orally or by book, put them in possession of the seedplot from which might grow the fairest forms of devotional life. By the creeds she taught them the faith. In Holy Scripture she pointed them to the true basis of all meditation. In prayer she trained them in the devotional life. By the commandments and the list of the seven deadly sins, she led them to self-examination and penitence. By her public offices she taught them due harmony of praise, of intercession, and of prayer. Finally, in the daily Eucharist she brought them to renewed self-consecration in

His private devotions.

the fulness of corporate worship. Mediæval religion, with all its faults, set before every man a definite scheme of Christian life and duty, and showed him how he might accomplish it.

Mediæval church architecture.

It is impossible to pass away from the consideration of the influence of the Church in the Middle Ages, without a word about those wonderful buildings on which she has stamped so much of her characteristic genius. The ecclesiastical buildings of a country are no bad criterion of its religious condition. Where they are mean, ill cared for, uniform, religion will be found narrow, introspective, stereotyped. Variety and wealth of imagination are everywhere impressed upon English mediæval churches. They are storehouses of artistic thought, so rich as hardly to be surpassed even by Italy. As we see them now, much has disappeared. They are but skeletons of what they once were. The glow of the pictured glass, the richness of the carved reredos and screen and tomb, the dignity of the majestic rood, the warmth of the frescoed wall have mostly vanished under the corroding breath of time, or the destructive bigotry of man. Yet as we see them now in their decay, or, more often, dressed in the smart veneer of a posthumous resuscitation, we still recognise a dignity of conception, a reverence of treatment, a modesty of artistic reserve, which are the great qualities of English mediæval art. The English builder does not put forth all his power like the builders of Amiens, or essay to put forth more than his power, like the builders of Beauvais. He has always something in reserve, and leaves his work as instinct with modesty and discipline as with variety and strength. It is rare indeed to find any English mediæval work which may rightly be called vulgar, while the nave of Durham, the central tower of Lincoln, the lantern of Ely, and the tower of Magdalen College, Oxford, vie with any buildings in the world for the highest combination of dignity, grace, and beauty. As a rule, our English cathedrals do not represent mainly a great effort of a building age, but are in themselves an epitomised history in stone of the diocese. They reflect the varying feelings, the growing skill, the enlarged needs of a living society. Permanence

and restfulness brood over the low arcades, the massive piers, the horizontal lines, the flat roof of the Romanesque naves of the century which followed the Conquest. Aspiration and enthusiasm soar like eagles into heaven in the pointed arches, the groined roof, the vertical pillars, the tapering spires of the Gothic of the centuries of Stephen Langton and the friars. Æsthetic appreciation and social convenience are conspicuous in the lofty painted clerestories, the flattened carved roofs, the unsymmetrical chantry and Lady Chapel, which mark the decadence of form and perfection of decorative taste common in the fifteenth century. A cathedral church summing up in itself the history of the diocese, or, like Canterbury, of the national Church, speaks plainly to all. It is more difficult to picture the history of a parish church in its varied efforts to adapt itself to the needs of the life around it. Yet England is covered with parish churches which form in themselves, for those who can read them, as complete an epitome of the religious life of the parish as the cathedral does of the religious life of the diocese. Let us try and collect the salient points of the history of such a church as the Middle Ages spun out their web.

History of a parish church.

On the top of a hill sweeping down to the silver river which twines itself about its base, in a clearing of the oak forest, which then covered so much of the midlands of England, stood before the Norman Conquest a small hamlet with its church of rough cast and timber. Not like the old Glastonbury church of wattle and daub, but of stout oak timbers from the neighbouring wood as a framework, with its interstices filled with rough plaster. Such was the workmanship of the majority of English churches before the Normans came. But it was not good enough for the proud strangers. In the division of the land, the forest and its hamlet fell to the lot of one of the greatest of the followers of the Conqueror, and during his overlordship a new building quickly began to be. It was built, as all Norman churches were built, of stone. The stone was naturally that dug out of the hill—a red and white sandstone, though for parts where lightness was specially required, tufa was

brought with incredible labour against the quick stream of the river, some sixty odd miles or more. The Norman church consisted, like most of the Norman churches built at that time, of a nave and two small lean-to aisles, divided from the nave by round arched arcades resting on massive round columns of stone with square bases. The nave was low and roofed with a flat wooden roof. At its east end was a wall pierced with a low round arch leading into a small oblong chancel, against the east wall of which was the altar. The deeply splayed windows on either side of the nave and at the east of the chancel admitted but little light. No benches or carved woodwork relieved the sombre severity of the whole. What ornament there was displayed itself in axe-hewn patterns on the outside of the door and windows. In winter terribly cold, even in summer terribly dark, the house of God was still far more magnificent than any house of man in that remote country, and could not fail to affect the worshipper with a sense of deep solemnity.

As the years passed on there came a change. The tithes and the patronage of the church were made over as a gift to a collegiate church in a neighbouring town, and became the maintenance of a prebendary. Spiritually, probably, the change was bad for the parish, for it lost its resident priest. It was good for the material structure of the church, for it was brought into close relations with a comfortable corporation. Soon the chancel was found too small, and in its place rose, in the thirteenth century, a spacious and lofty chancel of early English type, lighted with six large lancet windows on the sides and a triple lancet in the east wall, while the round arch between nave and chancel was stretched into a point. Another century and a half passed, and a still greater change was wrought. To the west of the building arose a tower, the landmark for miles to the country-side. The south aisle was pushed out into a chantry chapel, dedicated to S. Mary, fitted with its sandstone altar, which stands there to the present day, lighted by three large windows with elaborate Decorated tracery, carrying on its walls in rough distemper the story of the Incarnation. Above the old Norman arcade was added a clerestory of

Decorated windows, surmounted by an open roof of massive oak timbers. Across the chancel arch now stretched a large wooden gallery or loft, carrying upon it in life-sized figures the representations, in painted wood, of our Lord on the Cross, with S. Mary and S. John on either side. From the windows looked down in rich variety the saints whom England then held dear. In the aisles the pictured glass told to the unlearned the story of redemptive love. Above the high altar hung in mid-air the tabernacle, in which was kept the Blessed Sacrament, and in front of it burned continually a lamp. In the aisles and against the pillars stood small altars and shrines devoted to particular saints, and used for mass on their holy days. Round the altar of the chantry chapel was wrapped an altar frontal of stripes of alternate crimson and cream in rich woven silk, powdered with embroidered lilies and pomegranates in honour of S. Mary, whose chapel it adorned, and bearing in its centre embroidered figures of the faithful departed awaiting their final reconciliation in the bosom of Abraham, while round them flame-winged cherubim sang their eternal song of praise.

Thus the church stood at the close of the Middle Ages, uniting the solemnity of its Norman nave to the grace of its Decorated aisles and clerestory, and the noble beauty of its early pointed chancel, telling a tale of three centuries of Christian life, and three separate developments of Christian love. Thus it stood when the storms began to beat upon it, when the chantry was seized by the king and the tithe alienated to a courtier, when its noble rood was pulled down and its pictured glass broken to pieces; when, in the course of ages, the tracery of its windows fell in, and its floors exuded damp, and whitewash covered its frescoes, and pews climbed up its columns. Thus it stands still when in a happier age loving hands have repaired the ravages of time, tender memories have clustered thick round wall and reredos and window, and reverent art, skilful as that of the earlier builders, has reanimated the whole with the spirit of faith.

CHAPTER X

THE CHURCH ON THE EVE OF THE REFORMATION

A.D. 1485-1529

MANY times in the history of the Church has it seemed as if the gates of hell were about to prevail against her in spite of her Lord's promise. But never was the danger so near as it was to the western Church in the closing years of the fifteenth century. Under the influence of the Hildebrandine ideas the Church in the west had formed itself into a great organisation, of which the pope was the directing power and the papal court the supreme executive. They derived their authority from a more sacred source than any of the sovereigns of the world, not excluding the emperor. In them, and in the Church under them, was seen the realisation of that sense of the unity of Christendom, which was one of the greatest of the great thoughts by which the Middle Ages were inspired. Races emerging from the childhood of life, quick with energy, ungovernable in impulse, noble in aspiration, passionate in action, longed for the sense of brotherhood, felt the need of moral discipline, demanded spiritual leadership. The papacy under Hildebrand answered to the call. The organisation of Christendom, under its spiritual father at Rome, realised brotherhood. Canon law, with its source and centre at Rome resting on œcumenical council and constitution, adapting itself to present needs by papal decretal and extravagant,[1] supplied the aid to discipline. The Vicar of Christ on earth, the supreme

Decadence of the Church in the fifteenth century.

[1] These names were given to various collections of the decisions of the popes upon questions submitted to them.

arbiter of faith and morals, offered spiritual leadership. What wonder if Europe was dazzled for a time by the splendid vision, and kissed the papal feet in trusting love?

The disillusion came in time. The papacy had promised more than it could perform. It was easy to claim moral superiority to temporal sovereigns. It was difficult steadily to follow a moral policy. It was much harder to lead the world than to be led by it. One by one the great ideals of the papacy were thrown overboard. The first to disappear was its supreme fatherhood. At the beginning of the fourteenth century the pope ceased to be cosmopolitan, he became national. During the Avignonese captivity from 1305-1377 he was French, after the captivity he was Italian. With the significant exception of the unhappy reformer, Adrian VI., every pope since Martin V. has been an Italian, and the papal Church has been governed more and more as an extension of the diocese of Rome. But more than this, he was not only an Italian, and an Italian sovereign, but one among many Italian sovereigns; and, when each Italian sovereign was trying to extend his own dominions at the expense of his neighbour, the pope began to do the same. Towards the end of the fifteenth century the chief thing which occupied the attention of the popes was the acquisition of political power, sometimes by intrigue, sometimes by sheer wickedness, sometimes by open conquest. Julius II. at the age of eighty put on his armour and led his hordes of brigands to the storming of Mirandola, and so far had all conception of the supreme fatherhood of the pope vanished from men's minds that few in Italy thought any the worse of him for doing it. But it was obvious to thinking minds that to carve out temporal principalities by fire and sword for sons or nephews, or even for the papacy, was work hardly suited to the supreme father of Christendom, or likely to recall to men's recollection the great truth of the brotherhood of Christians. Gradually, under the pressure of circumstances, the doctrine of the Christian brotherhood of nations faded from men's minds, and was

Failure of the papacy.

(1) Its national character.

(2) Its political aims.

replaced by the doctrine of nationality. Europe became divided into a number of territorial units, some large and some small, but all without exception desirous of growing larger at the expense of their neighbours. Loyalty to the king took the place of loyalty to the Church as the inspiring principle of life. Patriotism rather than faith became the mainspring of action. No longer the common father of Christendom, the pope sank even in the eyes of churchmen to be looked upon as but one among the territorial sovereigns of Europe, to whom happened to be annexed certain definite legal rights as the head of a great organisation which affected all Europe, and certain indefinite spiritual claims which were of little practical importance.

(3) The corruption of the papal court.

The claim of the popes to maintain a high standard of discipline failed more egregiously still. As they succeeded in establishing themselves as the administrators-in-chief of all ecclesiastical affairs, and the supreme court of appeal in marriage causes, and in many cases where moral questions were involved, there grew up necessarily under their patronage a large and complicated system of legal and administrative business, having its centre at Rome. This soon became large enough to require a huge staff of officials—advocates, agents, notaries, clerks, etc.—all of whom had to make their livelihood out of the fees which they received. The more expensive law became, the longer suits lasted, the more obstacles there were to be overcome, the more these harpies flourished. The same was true of matters of administration. It was to the direct interest of the officials to hinder the transaction of business, to multiply obstructions in order that they might be paid for removing them. Strict codes of discipline were passed in order that a plentiful crop of dispensations might be reaped. In the matter of marriage, which was perhaps the most lucrative branch of business, so strict were the rules, and so lax the practice, that it was difficult to find a marriage tie so tightly knotted that a wealthy and powerful suitor was unable to break it by the purchase of a decree of nullity. In the fifteenth century the papal court was a by-word

for official extortion and corruption. Nor was reform possible, for its higher members, accustomed to the system from childhood, did not recognise the evil, and the lower members lived by it. When the Church became a vast legal and political organisation it required, naturally enough, lawyers, statesmen, and diplomatists among its officials. Consequently many of the leading cardinals and officials of the Roman court were not religious men at all, and had no interest whatever in the welfare of souls, but merely assumed clerical responsibilities as part of the paraphernalia of their office. Such men not infrequently became popes, and thus the whole ethical standard of the papacy became deteriorated, and a hopeless deadlock was reached. The corruptions and extortions of the papal system had become the common scandal of Christendom, and the popes themselves, the products of the system, were unable or unwilling to touch it.

(4) The worldliness of the popes.

What, then, shall we say of spiritual leadership? We may search in vain among the popes of the fifteenth century for the stern and lofty piety of Gregory VII., or the righteous zeal of Innocent III. When they tried to assume leadership, Europe did not even give them credit for sincerity. Calixtus III. and Pius II. earnestly desired to unite Europe for a crusade for the recapture of Constantinople from the Turks, and Europe simply would not believe them. So far from trying to assume spiritual leadership, later popes could not even sympathise with spiritual zeal. To the passionate enthusiasm of Savonarola Alexander VI. could offer but the stake, and Leo X. could meet the earnest perplexities of Luther with nothing but the parrot cry, Recant. Political interests had so completely dominated spiritual interests at Rome, that no one thought of electing a man to be pope because of his piety. It is hardly too much to say, that in the popes of the period preceding the Reformation nearly every quality is represented except that of religion. A Ciceronian diplomatist and a man of the world like Pius II., a Machiavellian statesman like Alexander VI., a leader of condottieri like Julius II., a soft spoken, pliant intriguer like Leo X., might all sit in the chair of Peter,

but it was no place for a Gerson or a Bessarion or a Savonarola. Yet there were thousands of humble souls, troubled with the wickedness and the oppression which they saw around them, crying out in half articulate language to the papacy for that spiritual leadership which it existed to give, and crying in vain.

The papacy had thus claimed the spiritual leadership of Christendom, and proved itself unable to use it when it had got it. Just at this time came a new call upon its energies. Ever since the death of the effete paganism of the fourth century before the conquering cross, the thought of Europe and the art of Europe had been moulded and directed by the Church. Christian principles of life and modes of thought had guided the mind of Christian Europe, even when civilisation owed much to Arab inspiration. The intellectual and artistic triumphs of the Middle Ages were essentially the products of the Catholic religion. They derived their strength from no other source. But towards the end of the fifteenth century a change was coming over men. The love for classical literature, which had always been strong, burst into enthusiasm under the influence of the revived knowledge of the Greek language. For a time it was irresistible. Men realised the strength of pagan thought, were astonished at the loftiness of some pagan morality, were attracted by the perfect form and warm life of pagan beauty. In art they demanded the representation of men and women as they were, not as they ought to be. In learning they claimed that the ancient authors should speak for themselves and not through the commentaries of commentators on translations. In morality they set up Plato as a rival to Christ, and did not shrink from the task of judging between them.

The Renaissance and Humanist movements.

Thus, from one point of view, the Renaissance movement appeared as a revolt against authority—the questioning of accepted views and traditional interpretations, the claim to judge everything on its intrinsic merits independently of tradition. From another point of view it was the revival of frankly pagan views of life and principles of conduct within the bosom of Christianity.

Failure of the Church to deal with them.

From another it was the claim of learning to apply the test of scholarly criticism unhesitatingly to the conclusions of theology and the credentials of the Church. But from whatever standpoint it was regarded, it was plainly a movement which imperatively demanded from the papacy a policy and an opinion. If moral and spiritual leadership meant anything at all, surely it meant a guarantee for the guidance of the faithful in such perilous days. But guidance was exactly what the papacy refused to give. Left to itself, without captain or steersman, the Church drifted about aimlessly on the unknown sea. As so often happens when leaders refuse to lead, the only voices that were heard were those of ignorance and presumption. Degenerate monks and ignorant friars attacked the movement with strident voices on its strongest side—that of learning—and strove to suppress the spirit of inquiry. While educated Italy was drifting quickly into paganism and vice, while obscurantist monks in Germany were trying to silence Reuchlin and Erasmus, when western Christendom was being sharply divided into the two camps of the old and the new learning, anxious and perplexed souls in thousands looked across the Alps to Rome for guidance and direction. The only answer vouchsafed to their passionate questionings was the shout of triumph as the papal banners floated over the walls of Mirandola, and the chink of the money in the boxes of the sellers of indulgences.[1]

In England the positive evil brought about by this state of things was not so great as it was upon the continent. The

[1] An indulgence was not, as is often supposed, a papal permission to commit sin, nor was it really a pardon for sin already committed. According to theologians, the commission of a sin involved two consequences—guilt, which put the sinner out of right relations with God, and was removed by absolution; and punishment, which had to be worked out either by penance in this life, or in purgatory. An indulgence was the remission of the whole or part of the punishment thus due, and was acquired by the performance of certain specified good works with a right disposition, and the payment of a certain sum of money in commutation of the required acts of penance. It is obvious, however, that except to trained intellects, the purchase of an indulgence would seem to be the acquisition of a remission of purgatorial fire, if not of the sin itself, by the payment of money. See on the whole question, Creighton, *History of the Papacy*, vol. v., pp. 58 68.

measure of independence which the Church of England had succeeded in maintaining now stood her and the nation in good stead. Bad as were the abuses, they were not so bad as they were in Italy, France, and Germany; and they were mainly found in matters of administration, which it was possible to remedy. As we have seen, the standard of life among the parish clergy and in the monasteries, though fallen from the high level of the thirteenth century, was very far from the corruption prevalent abroad. There was no loud cry for a moral reform at all costs, like that which was so soon to resound, clarion like, through Germany. The evils of the indulgence system never reached in England to the proportions which goaded Zwingli and Luther to active resistance. Of the half pagan literary and artistic movements of Italy there was absolutely nothing known. On the contrary, among the Humanists were found the most brilliant and devoted of Churchmen. Archbishop Warham, dean Colet, prince Henry, and Sir Thomas More, were the recognised leaders of the new learning. Even the great scholar Erasmus deigned from time to time to bury himself far from civilisation amid the dank fogs of England, attracted alike by the wit of More and the pension of Warham. Where Erasmus was to be found there was no danger of revolution. It is true that at the universities, especially among the friars, were those who eagerly maintained the infallibility of the old dialectical methods of the schools, and rudely denounced the new textual criticism as rank heresy. But they had small influence in high places; and when prince Henry ascended the throne in 1509, and Thomas Wolsey attained to power, the process of filling the university offices with scholars of the more modern type proceeded apace. The collapse of the papacy as a spiritual power affected England negatively rather than positively. Already the long and sordid history of papal extortion, of papal mal-administration, of papal judicial corruption had taught Englishmen to expect but little from Rome

Better condition of things in England.

Christian character of the Humanist movement.

Slighter effect of the collapse of the papacy.

Its loss of moral authority merely confirmed them in their opinion, and encouraged them to find in loyalty to their national sovereign a centre for that zeal and devotion which once the pope could claim at their hands. Outside the ranks of the official and the 'regular' clergy there were few who would care to run risks for any papal prerogative whatever, there were fewer still who would care to defend the pope against attack, if he became an obstacle in the way of practical reforms.

But certainly, in the reign of Henry VII., no one dreamed for one moment that such a question was looming on the horizon.

Policy of Henry VII., 1485-1509.

Coming to the throne with a doubtful title, he followed the policy of the House of Lancaster in leaning upon the support of the Church, and of the House of York in dispensing as far as possible with the assistance of parliaments. A rigid, perhaps mean. economy made him rich and freed him from parliamentary control. Clerical ministers rescued him from the danger of the growth of king-making families of officials. The wars of the Roses left the lay baronage weak and unimportant. So Henry was enabled to hand on to his son a power more uncontrolled than any king in England had enjoyed since Henry II. Like him, Henry VIII., when he came to the throne, was absolute master of all England except the Church. Unlike him, when he died he was master of the Church too.

Brilliant indeed were the prospects of England in the early years of Henry VIII. Among all the sovereigns of Europe there

Character of Henry VIII., 1509.

was none so endowed with kingly qualities, none so fitted to call forth the slumbering enthusiasm of a loyal people, as the young monarch who graced the throne of England. Handsome in face and figure, well-proportioned and athletic in frame, dignified in bearing, genial in address, generous in thought and action, he stood out before his subjects every inch a king. His mind was quick and powerful, his love of knowledge genuine, his patronage of learning enlightened. The current of life ran hot through his veins. Energy, decision, and masterful will stamped themselves on

every lineament of his countenance. A strong and passionate nature displayed itself in every look and every gesture; but over all religion asserted her sway, and hand in hand with domestic love kept the rude elements under discipline. Happily united to a princess of his own deliberate choice, surrounded by a brilliant and capable band of advisers, which included the wisdom of Fox, the judgment of More, and the genius of Wolsey, Henry indeed seemed singled out to be the pioneer of England into those new and unexplored regions of thought and enterprise which were opening out before her through the triumphs of the printing press and the discovery of the new world.

Prophetic eyes might see how easily such a nature could degenerate. If the restraints of discipline were once cast to the winds, and the lust of power and possession allowed full scope, what limit was possible to cruelty and tyranny and passion? 'Master Cromweil,' said More to him when he was just entering the king's service, 'you are now entered into the service of a most noble, wise, and liberal prince: if you will follow my poor advice you shall in your counsel-giving to his grace ever tell him what he ought to do, but never what he is able to do. For if a lion knew his own strength, hard were it for any man to rule him.' Unfortunately the advice came too late. The lion had already tasted of power, and was determined to glut his appetite to the full. 'Often have I kneeled to him,' said Wolsey on his death-bed, 'the space of an hour or two, to persuade him from his will and appetite, and could not bring it to pass to dissuade him therefrom.' The energy and determination of the leader soon sank to be but the uncontrolled will of the despot. Before that imperious will, personal obligations, national liberties, traditional associations, and ecclesiastical rights soon lay crushed and mangled, like the votaries of Juggernath under the blood-stained car of their god, and the frank and gallant king degenerated into a suspicious and revengeful tyrant. But as yet these horrors were held in the womb of the future. England rejoiced at being rid of the mean prudence of Henry

VII., and the extortions of his unscrupulous ministers, and was prepared enthusiastically to support her young hero in his bid for leadership in the world.

Influence of Wolsey.

Until the marriage question came to disturb the current of affairs the policy of Henry was the policy of Wolsey, and was chiefly concerned in winning for England a position of equality, if not of predominance, among the nations of Europe. Wolsey was the first great foreign minister whom England produced since the country can be said to have had a foreign policy in anything like the modern sense of the phrase. He was essentially a politician, not an ecclesiastic; the predecessor of Burleigh and Chatham, not the successor of Becket and William of Wykeham. But though he was a pluralist bishop, who for years never set foot in his dioceses, and the father of an illegitimate family, he was neither personally irreligious nor regardless of the need of ecclesiastical reform.

His efforts at Church reform.

He obtained the legatine office from the pope in order that he might be more free to carry into effect administrative reforms. He especially meditated a thorough cleansing of the Augean stable of the ecclesiastical courts. He saw with the eye of a statesman the grave danger which would attend the Church if she lost her intellectual supremacy. Though not a scholar in the technical sense of the word, he was an enlightened patron of learning, welcomed the new methods of criticism, and encouraged the study of Hebrew and of Greek. In his school at Ipswich and his magnificent foundation of Cardinal's College at Oxford, he sought to establish a system of education and a centre of learning and study, which should direct the intellectual energies of England, indissolubly connect the new movement with the Church, and hallow it with the spirit of religion. To do this he did not hesitate to use ecclesiastical endowments which were no longer fulfilling their purpose. Just as archbishop Chichele had confiscated priories dependent upon foreign religious houses in order to found All Souls College in the reign of Henry VI., so Wolsey now suppressed a number of

the smaller religious houses which had ceased to serve any practical purpose, moved the inmates into larger and more flourishing communities, and used the revenues for his foundations at Ipswich and Oxford. It was in no sense a confiscation of ecclesiastical property for national purposes, but a redistribution of funds among different ecclesiastical purposes. It took endowments from monks and gave them to collegiate clergy, just as in our own days, by a different machinery, much of the endowments of bishoprics and collegiate churches has been applied to the foundation and maintenance of parishes.

In all this Wolsey was the last and the most splendid of the Church reformers of the Middle Ages. In England he stands at the end of a long line of statesmen and saints, which includes the honoured names of Wilfrid and Benedict Biscop, of S. Dunstan and Harold, of Stephen Harding and S. Hugh of Avalon, of Walter de Merton, William of Wykeham, Henry Chichele, Henry of Windsor, Richard Fox, and John Colet. Founders of monasteries, of colleges, and of schools, all believed that the progress of the human race was best advanced by the strict training of the individual character in the free intellectual atmosphere of Catholic theology. The progress of the world was, it is true, a progress by reaction. Each century brought something of its own by way of hindrance or of help. To the individual, gauging everything around him by the measure of his own fussy self-importance, it seemed as if the present was always degenerating, the past always dilating into an unreal greatness. Yet through the ages the Church of God moved majestically on towards the goal of ultimate perfection, assimilating slowly from each century what was good, rejecting painfully what was bad. Each little life as it passed, each little institution as it lived, brought its quota to the common stock, aided or retarded the common end. Each statesman and each reformer brought his humble product of work imperfectly done, and God, the Great Organiser, accepted all, and trained each part to its appropriate end.

Principle of Wolsey's reforms.

Such a belief was based on the conception of religion as a great organic whole, a society which, as a living body, adapted itself gradually to varying needs and grew by a natural growth, reformed itself by putting out fresh shoots of vigorous and pure life, and allowing diseased and effete parts to wither and drop off. But the processes of life, if sure, are slow. Hasty and impulsive surgeons will not wait. They demand in their impatience the immediate use of the knife and the cautery. So it happened in the Church of the sixteenth century on the continent. When all reform of the papacy seemed impossible, men lost heart and lost faith in the Church. They rose in hot rebellion against spiritual wickedness in high places. They overthrew the Church in their anger and manufactured for themselves a new theology and a new organisation. They invented the doctrine of the churches to supersede that of the Church, and offered to mankind twenty quarto volumes of dogma instead of the Nicene Creed as a test of orthodoxy. In England the movement took quite another shape. Alterations in doctrine did not come for many years. There was no attempt to form a new organisation until that of the presbyterian *classes* in the latter years of Elizabeth, which failed. There was no rising of the people in moral indignation against their official superiors, no prophet like Luther to claim their allegiance, no logician like Calvin to dominate their intellects. The English Reformation began as a matter of policy, an affair of kings and ministers and parliaments. It concerned itself with the assertion of national liberties, with the refusal of foreign claims, with questions of legal and constitutional history, not of theology or worship. Quickly it became a matter of kingly tyranny, and seemed for the moment to lay the whole constitution of England irrevocably under the heel of the crown. It was not until the personal tyranny established by Henry VIII. had degenerated into an official tyranny carried out under Edward VI. that any serious effort was made to construct a new theology for the Church of England, and to alter her formularies in accordance with it. But the outbreak of the constitutional

Difference of principle between the Reformation abroad and in England.

question alone, and the quarrel with the papacy which resulted from it, were sufficient to deal a death-blow to the reforms begun by Wolsey. When the king took the direction of ecclesiastical affairs into his own hands there was little chance for other schemes. The natural processes of organic growth were soon rudely affected by the indelible marks of the lion's teeth.

CHAPTER XI

THE REPUDIATION OF PAPAL AUTHORITY

A.D. 1529-1534

The causes of the Reformation in England.

THE suit for a divorce[1] by Henry VIII. from Catherine of Arragon was not the cause but merely the occasion of the break between England and Rome. The bitter memories of the long struggle carried on between the two powers in the Middle Ages, and the deep though patient resentment with which all classes endured the extortions and misgovernment of the ecclesiastical officials, had produced throughout the country a state of ill concealed hostility to the administrative power of the papacy. The loss of moral authority by the popes in the fifteenth century made men indifferent to their spiritual claims. A spiritual prerogative, the only tangible result of which was seen in worldliness, extortion, and corruption, was not likely to have much influence over a practical and independent people. All that was wanted in order to shake the frail structure to its foundations was a leader and an occasion. When the king himself became the leader, and the occasion was found in a personal question, to the solution of which the king applied the whole force of his nature and the powers of his government, the result was inevitable. The king's demand became raised into the dignity of a national policy, the 'king's business' became

[1] It is convenient to call the suit one for a divorce, but inaccurate according to the modern use of words. A modern divorce is a dissolution of a marriage acknowledged to have been validly made, and is contrary to the recognised principles of the law of the western Church. The divorces of the Middle Ages, and those of Henry VIII., were suits for nullity of marriage on the ground that it had never validly been made at all.

an international question, and few Englishmen were found to raise their voices in favour of a foreign claim which was the chief obstacle in the way of a national object.

For ten or twelve years Henry and Catherine of Arragon lived happily and contentedly together. But as the queen got older, and the chances of her having a male heir became less, Henry began to give free rein to his passions, and more than one lady of the court was credited with the dishonour of being the royal mistress. In 1519 Lady Elizabeth Blount bore him a son, whom he publicly acknowledged and made duke of Richmond. A little later he formed a connection with Mary Boleyn. In 1524 the idea of getting rid of Catherine and taking a new wife, in the hope of having a son by her, suggested itself to him, and he asked the advice of his confessor, Longland. Probably the death of so many of the children of Catherine really raised genuine scruples about the rightfulness of his marriage. But the political difficulties attending such unceremonious treatment of the aunt of the powerful emperor Charles v. were sufficient to make the boldest of statesmen pause.

The beginning of the divorce question, 1524.

Wolsey especially was by no means anxious to see so large an apple of discord thrown into European politics. As time went on, Henry became more determined to run the risk, and whispers of the project began secretly to reach the ears of cunning diplomatists. It is said that Henry himself purposed simply to have his marriage declared null by an English ecclesiastical court, and let pope and emperor bluster to their hearts' content. He knew well enough that a personal wrong once accomplished would never for long be suffered to stand in the way of political advantage, and the friendship of England was too important for even pope or emperor to reject. But Wolsey had other schemes in view. He wished Henry to make a political marriage, and that was impossible unless the union with Catherine had been annulled by the highest authority and in the most formal manner. Marriage causes, even in England, had always been reserved to the decision of the pope since appeals to Rome had been allowed at all. It was out of the question that a Catholic prince and

defender of the faith like Henry, and a prince of the Church like Wolsey, should rudely set aside a right of the pope which had been so long exercised, or a statesman with any patriotism permit the succession to the crown to be rendered doubtful owing to a conflict of jurisdiction between the papal and the national courts. So it was determined to apply to the pope for a declaration of nullity of marriage between Henry and Catherine, and in 1526 an envoy was at Rome to urge the king's suit at the papal court. About the same time an event happened in England which gave a new complexion to the whole matter. Henry fell violently in love with Anne Boleyn, the younger sister of his former mistress, and determined to make her his wife. From that time the strongest of human passions was brought to bear upon the most imperious of kingly wills. No longer was the divorce a matter of political arrangement which might wait for a convenient season and be a part of diplomatic schemes, it was the imperative demand of a powerful king determined to have his will, cost him what it might.

The chances of success.

When Henry VIII. applied to Clement VII. to declare his marriage void, he had no reason to think that there would be much difficulty about it. Only a few years before, Alexander VI. had granted a divorce between Louis XII. of France and his wife on account of her sterility. The papal court was well accustomed to find excuses for setting aside inconvenient marriages, and the ingenuity of the papal lawyers could always be trusted to find the necessary technical grounds for doing so, provided it was stimulated by a sufficiently large fee. But it is true there was a special difficulty in this case which arose from the care which the papal lawyers had taken to satisfy the cautious scruples of Henry VII. when he wished his son to marry Catherine of Arragon. All the provisions which were put into the documents then issued to fortify and assure the match now of course became additional obstacles to declaring it null and void.

Nature of the issue involved.

The main question involved was a simple one. Catherine had been married to prince Arthur, the elder brother of Henry VIII. for the last four months of his sickly life. If that union had not been consum-

mated, it was only a betrothal in the eyes of the law, and not a marriage, and there was no ground whatever for impugning the validity of the subsequent marriage between Henry and Catherine. But even if it was a legal marriage, it did not therefore follow that the second marriage was void, for although a marriage with a deceased brother's wife was contrary to the law of the Church, it was considered to come within the powers of the pope to remove the impediment by dispensation. In the case of Henry and Catherine, Julius II. had granted a dispensation by bull in the most ample form possible, providing against every objection that could be raised, and expressly contemplating the possibility that the union with Arthur was a legally valid marriage. Not content with that, to make assurance doubly sure, a few months afterwards he issued a 'brief' confirming the bull of dispensation and guarding it against all technical objections as to form or statement. So when Henry VIII. in 1526 asked Clement VII. to pronounce his marriage null and void, he was asking a pope to repudiate a recent act of one of his own predecessors which had been made secure by every device known to papal law. He was in fact asking him to deal one of the heaviest blows imaginable at his own office and authority. If the bull of dispensation for the marriage of Henry VIII. and Catherine of Arragon with its confirming brief could be set aside, there was not an act of the papacy that might not be called in question.

Nevertheless, great as were the difficulties, there is little reason to think that Clement and his advisers would not have seen their way to conquer them. Probably they would have taken the simple course of finding some purely technical ground on which to declare the bull of dispensation and the confirming brief invalid. But unfortunately Clement had lately been lending himself to political combinations against the emperor, and in May 1527, just as an important embassy was leaving England to discuss the divorce question with the pope, an imperialist army stormed Rome, and Clement became a prisoner in the power of Charles V. This at once altered the whole condition of affairs. As long as Clement was in a

Misfortunes of the pope, 1527-1529.

position of independence he was able in some measure to balance Henry against Charles. Certainly he would never have run the risk of losing the allegiance of England for the mere fear of displeasing Charles. But after he fell into the power of the emperor it was a different matter. If he dared to be a party to a cruel wrong to the aunt of the master of Italy, he must say farewell to his sovereignty and his political ambitions if not to his liberty.

His inability to grant the divorce.

The story of the negotiations of the next two years is pitiful enough. The only thing with which Henry would be satisfied —*i.e.* the use of the papal authority in some valid form to annul the marriage with Catherine—was the one thing which the pope could not grant. Every device which ingenuity could suggest, or despair prompt, was tried in vain. Catherine was entreated to enter a religious house, which would have settled all difficulties, but a sacrifice which she might possibly have made to the national interests was energetically refused to adulterous passion. She was not likely to smooth the path by which her rival was to ascend her throne. The pope was urged to evade his own responsibility by appointing a commission to settle the question finally in England. He was pressed to give a private undertaking not to receive any appeal from Catherine. He was even asked to allow Henry to have two wives at the same time. But Clement with all his faults was no Luther to give a religious sanction to bigamy. Two things were ever present to his mind. As supreme head of the western Church he could not refuse to exercise the prerogatives of his office. If Catherine appealed to him he must hear the appeal or abdicate his office. As the political vassal of the emperor he must obey his master's will. If he heard the appeal at all he must decide in favour of Catherine. Both the spiritual claims of the papacy and the temporal interests of the papal state combined to render any other policy impossible. Neither Clement nor Wolsey was under any illusions. They both fully understood the risks which they ran. But the ball had been set rolling down hill and nothing could stop it. Clement knew as well as any one that if he refused Henry's demand he would

probably lose the allegiance of England, but he knew equally well that if he granted it he would no less probably lose that of all Germany, and end his days an exile from Italy. Henry on his side was more than ever determined to have his will. If the pope and Wolsey proved to be obstacles in the way, so much the worse for the pope and Wolsey. At last under pressure of threats Clement gave an unwilling consent to permit cardinals Campeggio and Wolsey to inquire into the validity of the marriage with prince Arthur in England, accompanying it with a private promise to allow their decision to be final. Under pressure from the emperor he withdrew the promise almost as soon as he had made it. It was clear that nothing could prevent Clement from hearing an appeal from Catherine if such an appeal was made. Vainly did Wolsey and the king endeavour by espionage and almost imprisonment to prevent any appeal from Catherine from leaving the country. The Spanish ambassador was too crafty for them. On April 21, 1529, it was safe in the emperor's hands. On July 13th Clement acted on it and formally advoked the cause to Rome to be tried and decided in his own court.

The policy of Wolsey had failed. He had endeavoured to set aside the marriage by invoking the supremacy of the pope, and casting the responsibility of the decision upon him. But it was just because the pope was appealed to as supreme judge that it was impossible for him to refuse to decide the question himself. Because he was a subordinate political sovereign as well as a supreme judge, if he decided the question at all, he must decide it according to the wishes of his political superior—the emperor. When Henry in the fierceness of his baffled passion looked round for the cause of his failure, he found it in this claim of spiritual supremacy, which was really but the handmaid of international politics. His own will was frustrated, his crown dishonoured in the eyes of Europe, the interests of the nation imperilled, not because the pope as the representative of Christian morality was bound to maintain the sanctity of the marriage law, but because the ruler of the papal states was bound to carry out the wishes

Real cause of the failure of Wolsey's policy.

of the master of Italy. And further, this was no isolated and unique event. As long as the pope remained an important political sovereign it was impossible to prevent the exercise of his spiritual prerogative from being at the mercy of his political necessities. It was only because the popes after the Reformation became such exceedingly unimportant political sovereigns, that the difficulty has not played so large a part in the subsequent history of Europe. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries it was a very real obstacle indeed to national progress. Granted that the king had right on his side in the matter of the divorce (and as far as legal arguments go his case was by no means weak), it was intolerable that the succession to the crown should be imperilled because of the political necessities of the sovereign of one of the smaller Italian states. This is the real meaning of that strong repudiation of foreign power which is so frequently insisted upon throughout the Reformation in England. Papal supremacy, however high its sanction, proved practically to be foreign supremacy. Royal supremacy, however tyrannical in its exercise, was at least national.

Rather than submit to the dictation of the emperor exercised through the pope in his marriage relations, Henry determined to call into play the sturdy patriotism of the English people, and their sense of injustice at the long-continued misgovernment of the pope. No one who knew anything of the past history of England could shut his eyes to the fact that until the coming of the Normans no such administrative rights as those claimed by the popes had ever been exercised. During the past three centuries they had gradually been successfully asserted, but never admitted without protest. When they had been freely exercised it was by arrangement with the crown, not by virtue of any inherent prerogative of the papacy. The spiritual primacy of the popes, it must be remembered, was not yet in question. There was not a Christian in England from the days of Theodore to the days of Cranmer who did not believe that the pope sat in the chair of S. Peter, and inherited from S. Peter the primacy

Appeal of Henry to national patriotism against the papacy.

over the other bishops of the western Church which S. Peter was supposed to have exercised over the Apostles. It was no light matter to despise the councils or disregard the wishes of the apostolic see. They came with all the moral prestige of the greatest spiritual institution in the Christian commonwealth. But it is one thing to acknowledge the weight of moral authority, it is another to admit the force of indefeasible right. The difference is the whole difference between the principles of constitutional and despotic government. *Securus judicat orbis terrarum* is the motto of the former, *Sic volo sic jubeo* that of the latter. When the papacy in the earlier centuries came forward to lead Catholic thought, the Church willingly accepted the leadership and followed the leader. When in the later Middle Ages it claimed supreme rule as a divine prerogative, and demanded obedience to its commands as the first of Christian duties, men began to inquire into the credentials of such a claim. When those credentials were found to be based largely upon documental forgeries and to have no warrant in history or Scripture, when obedience was demanded in the interests of worldly politics and personal ambition and not of religion, they cast them impatiently aside. In Germany and Switzerland they rebelled against the whole system of the Church which was so intimately bound up in Europe with the papacy. In England they had recourse to the constitutional principles of earlier ages, clung close to the idea of nationality, and strove to recover under somewhat altered conditions as much as was possible of the self-government which the Church of England had enjoyed for the first five hundred years of her life.

The failure of the policy of Wolsey meant his disgrace and fall. Henry, determined to have his will in spite of pope and emperor, fully understood the necessity of making sure of the support of the nation in his policy. With the sure instinct of a statesman he saw that he was safe if he had the nobility and the Parliament on his side. He could crush the clergy and neglect the people provided they were left leaderless. It is not to be supposed that he planned a deliberate scheme of royal tyranny. There was still in him more

Deterioration of Henry's character.

of the generous gallant of 1509 than of the moody ruffian of 1546. But he had started on the downward path. He had surrendered himself to the guidance of passion. He had taught himself to trample upon the most sacred rights of faithful wedded life, to condescend to the meanest subterfuges and tricks in his warfare against a defenceless woman, to treat points and presumptions of law as if they decided questions of personal morals, and it was inevitable that his character should deteriorate under the influence of sin, and one act of tyranny lead to another. The first step to be taken was the punishment of Wolsey, and the weapon lay ready to hand could he bring himself to use it. In earlier days he had asked the pope to confer upon Wolsey the position of a papal legate, and the pope had complied. But technically, by accepting the office even at the request of the king, Wolsey had broken the statute of Præmunire, and all his property was forfeit to the crown did the king choose to put the law in force against him. This Henry now determined to do. On the 9th of October 1529 the information was lodged by the king's attorney. Wolsey at once submitted, surrendered all his appointments and property, and was eventually permitted to retain the archbishopric of York and a pension of 1000 marks a year. But his enemies were not satisfied. His letters were opened, his servants tampered with, and evidence of treasonable correspondence with France produced sufficient to procure his arrest on the 4th of November 1530 at his house at Cawood. On his way to the Tower he was seized with dysentery, and died at the abbey of Leicester on the 29th of the same month.

Disgrace of Wolsey, 1529.

The bolt to which Wolsey had succumbed had not spent its force by striking down the haughty and unpopular minister. If Wolsey was guilty of a præmunire in exercising the legatine authority, equally guilty were the clergy of England for having obeyed it and the laity for having acquiesced in it. In December 1530 an information was filed in the king's bench against the whole clergy of England, and on the 16th of the following month

The recognition of the Supremacy, 1531.

the terrified Convocation of the southern province met to find out on what terms they could obtain their pardon. It soon appeared that the king was determined to have both a grant of money and such an acknowledgment of his authority in ecclesiastical matters as would enable him to keep the clergy quiet and tractable, and enable him to meet the papal claims on something like equal ground. After much discussion it was agreed that the Convocation of Canterbury should pay the king £100,000 and recognise his supremacy in the following formula: 'We acknowledge His Majesty to be the singular protector, only and supreme lord, and, so far as the law of Christ will allow, supreme head of the English Church and Clergy.' A few weeks later the turn of the Convocation of York came. They were required to grant the king £18,000 and accept the formula agreed upon by the southern province. The money was granted without trouble, but the bishops objected to part of the formula. They said that the words 'supreme head of the English Church' were ambiguous, and might be held to imply a spiritual power in the king. To meet this objection Henry wrote personal letters to them repudiating any such meaning, and explaining that the true interpretation of the words was that they acknowledged the existence in the crown of a power to see that the spiritual authority discharged its functions for the good order and peace of society. On this the formula was accepted, and in the session of 1531 acts of Parliament were passed granting formal pardon to the clergy and to the laity of England for their offence.

In obtaining from the clergy a recognition of the supremacy of the crown in a large and elastic formula, Henry did not probably intend anything more at the time than to secure the acquiescence of the spiritual estate to the legislation against the pope which he was about to carry through Parliament. In that body he was sure of the support of the Commons, for the house had been carefully packed by his orders, and contained a large proportion of his nominees. The lay nobles were too weak in influence and too patriotic in sentiment to oppose a policy which they looked upon mainly as a

Its object.

shrewd blow dealt to the ecclesiastical power, of which they were inordinately jealous. The only danger of serious opposition came from the spiritual lords and the clerical estate, and Henry thought to draw the teeth of that monster when he forced the Convocations to accept the formula of the royal supremacy. He soon found that the clergy were not inclined to submit without a struggle. Convocation was anxious for the reform of practical abuses. It was willing that an authorised translation of the New Testament should be prepared. It petitioned the crown that a stop should be put to the payment of annates to the pope. But it was not as yet ready to welcome anything which tended to curtail the rights or the privileges which the clergy had been in the habit of enjoying, or to threaten a serious breach in the unity of Christendom.

Already, in 1529, during the first session of the Parliament, statutes had been passed, in spite of the opposition of the clergy, limiting clerical fees and preventing clerical trade. In the session of 1532 an act removing great practical abuses of the courts of the archbishops was carried into law without the consent of the Convocations ever having been asked. In the same session Henry placed before Parliament the first great statute directed against the administrative authority of the pope. Convocation had petitioned for relief from the payment of annates. Henry gave them more than they had asked for. By the act in restraint of the payment of Annates (23 Hen. VIII., c. 20, enlarged by 25 Hen. VIII., c. 20), the payment of annates to the pope was stopped, and it was provided that if in consequence of this the pope refused to grant the usual bulls for the consecration of archbishops and bishops, or placed the kingdom under an interdict, the celebration of the sacraments should continue in spite of the interdict, and the consecration of archbishops and bishops take place in the realm, in spite of the want of the papal authorisation.

The Annates act, 1532.

In this statute Henry and the Parliament not only reformed a gross abuse but laid down a great constitutional principle. They denied that the sanction of the pope was essential to

the validity of the consecration of bishops and the celebration of the sacraments. They based this denial on the historical fact that 'divers archbishops and bishops have been heretofore in ancient time' so consecrated, and they asserted that in doing so they were as 'obedient, devout, Catholick, and humble children of God as any People be within any Realm christened.' But the bishops not unnaturally were somewhat frightened at so clear an enunciation of principles opposed to the whole traditions of the mediæval papacy. They could not look with equanimity on so summary a reversal of the ideas and practice of three centuries, however strong and unassailable the historical arguments for it might be, and they accordingly offered a staunch but unavailing opposition to the bill. Through the personal exertions of the king the statute passed the Lords by the unanimous vote of the temporal peers against the unanimous vote of the spiritual peers.

Opposition of the spiritual peers.

So vigorous an opposition showed Henry that he was not yet fully master of the clergy. As long as they were able to legislate freely for the Church in Convocation, and commanded about half of the votes of the House of Lords, they might at any moment form a very dangerous centre of disaffection should he, either in his proceedings against Catherine or in his measures against the pope, stir up the embers of popular wrath. He determined to discredit them before the world and to cow them into submission. On March 18th, 1532, the very day on which the Annates bill passed the Lords, the Commons issued a 'Supplication against the Ordinaries,' instigated and probably partly composed by the king. In this 'supplication' they stated that there existed a hatred between the clergy and the laity, due partly to the power which the clergy enjoyed of making canons without the king's leave, and partly to the abuses of the ecclesiastical courts, the excessive fees charged by the clergy, and the injustice of the procedure in cases of heresy. The bishops intrusted their reply to the able hands of Stephen Gardiner, who had been rewarded

The Supplication against the Ordinaries, 1532.

Answer of Stephen Gardiner.

for his services as envoy in the divorce business by the bishopric of Winchester in 1531. Gardiner had succeeded to Wolsey as the king's chief minister in foreign affairs. He had been the most successful and the most outspoken of the many agents by whose threats Henry had sought to overcome the timidity and the scruples of Clement. It was Gardiner who had openly told the pope that if he would not grant the king his will England would decline from her allegiance to him. It was his business, when the crisis which he had foretold had come, to keep open to the end a door of escape for the weary pontiff should he show any signs of wishing to avail himself of it. Deeply attached to Catholic theology and practice, a staunch and learned adherent of mediæval methods and principles, without any sympathy whatever for Protestantism, he threw himself heart and soul into the national policy of Henry VIII. in its denial of the supremacy of the pope as essential to the existence of the Church. The reformation in England appealed to him in its constitutional and historical aspects. Its essence lay in the national protest against papal usurpations, in the vindication of the right of the English Church to self-government, and of the crown to freedom from papal interference. Its danger appeared to him to consist in the subordination of the clergy to Parliament, and in too wide deviations from accustomed standards of faith and practice. He was therefore naturally marked out by his attitude of mind and his great ability to become the leader of the conservative party in the English Reformation, more national than were Fisher or More, but strongly opposed to the revolutionary tendencies in government and in religion represented by Cromwell and Somerset.

But hardly had his answer been presented to the Commons than the king himself entered the lists against him. Early in May Henry sent to the clergy an ultimatum which he required them to accept. It had reference only to their powers of legislation. After some negotiation Convocation consented that in future they would not enact any new canons without the king's licence to assemble and enact them, and would not, when enacted, enforce them without

The Submission of the Clergy, 1532.

the royal assent. As for the existing canon law, they agreed that it should be revised by a royal commission of thirty-two persons, and all canons found to be contrary to the laws of God and the realm taken away by the king and the clergy. This in itself only defined with some increase of stringency the extent of a control which the crown had always possessed and often strenuously exercised over ecclesiastical legislation in the past. But when taken in conjunction with the definition of the royal supremacy agreed to in 1531, it practically rendered the clergy powerless in Henry's hands. By the recognition of the supremacy of 1531 the king obtained the right of representing every murmur of opposition to his will as an act of disloyalty to the crown and unfaithfulness to the Church, whose supreme head on earth he was admitted to be. By the submission of the clergy of 1532 he acquired the power of suppressing any formulated opposition to his policy in the ecclesiastical parliament, and of wiping out of the ecclesiastical statute-book any existing legislation which seemed to be contrary to his claims. Thus, although it was true that nothing had been done except to define and formulate rights of the crown in relation to the Church, which had frequently been insisted upon and exercised in past ages, still it was equally true that their revival and exercise by a king of the character of Henry VIII. at a time in the history of England when kingly authority was exceptionally strong practically introduced a new state of things. There was no new principle involved in the relations of Church and State, but the mutual influence of the two bodies upon each other was altered. Henry and his children inherited the position of the eastern emperors or of Charles the Great rather than of William I. or even Philip the Fair.

Its effect.

In the summer of 1532 the aged Warham, archbishop of Canterbury, passed to his rest. This enabled Henry to press the divorce suit to a conclusion by taking care that the new archbishop should be on his side. There was one man marked out by his services and the quality of his mind for the post. Thomas Cranmer had been of more assistance

Thomas Cranmer.

than any one else to Henry in the management of the divorce business since the disgrace of Wolsey. He was a learned and acute lawyer, who brought to Henry's assistance the aid of a practised advocate, not that of a responsible statesman or a conscientious theologian. It was his business to make out the best case he could for his master, to sift the different arguments, to choose the strongest, and to see how they could be best applied.

His influence in the divorce question.

This he did with remarkable skill. He pointed out to the king that his case was unanswerable from a legal point of view on the crucial question of the validity of the marriage of Arthur and Catherine. The presumption of law in favour of its validity, considering that the parties had lived together for four months after the marriage ceremony, was too strong to be rebutted except by direct evidence. Such evidence could only be that of the interested parties themselves, which would not be believed on their own behalf. Henry, therefore, had only to hold his tongue to allow the presumption of law to establish the validity of the former marriage.

That once admitted, it became a serious question whether the pope had any power at all to remove the impediment by dispensation. All canonists agreed that he could not dispense from the divine law, but only from the ecclesiastical law. If marriage with the widow of a deceased brother could be proved to be against the divine law, the bull of dispensation and the confirming brief issued by Julius II. became in the eyes of the law worth only the lead with which they were encumbered. The pope and his court had of course decided the matter in favour of their own powers. But Cranmer suggested to Henry that if a consensus of the learned men of Europe could be procured on the other side, he might safely proceed to have his marriage set aside in England in reliance on the public opinion of European experts, and convict the pope of trying illegally to extend his prerogative. It was a revolt of expert learning against official authority. During the summer of 1532 Henry's emissaries were at all the universities collecting opinions. In England the two universities had to be subjected

His policy of consulting the universities.

to a good deal of coercion before they would consent to support the king's view. In Germany Cranmer could obtain but few signatures. Both Catholics and Lutherans strongly disapproved of the divorce. In Italy as many could be got as were paid for. In Paris Francis I. obliged the Sorbonne to support Henry. On the whole, the policy of Cranmer was successful. If he had not shown that the public opinion of all learned Europe was on his side, he had at least proved that the attempt of Julius II. to settle so delicate and doubtful a case off-hand by a papal dispensation was unwarrantable and inconclusive.

In the middle of his negotiations in Germany, Cranmer received the notice of his appointment to the see of Canterbury, but owing to various delays he was not consecrated till the 30th of March 1533. Directly he was in full possession of his authority the divorce was pushed forward with all possible speed. Certain of the result of the proceedings, Henry would not wait for their formal completion. Either in November 1532 or January 1533 he married Anne Boleyn privately. On March 26, 1533. Convocation met and was called upon to pronounce canonically on the validity of the marriage of Henry and Catherine. It divided itself into two houses of canonists and theologians. The former house found that the union of Arthur and Catherine was a valid marriage, and the latter that a marriage with a relict of a deceased brother was so repugnant to the divine law as not to be dispensable by the pope. A few weeks later the Convocation of York came to similar conclusions.

Cranmer appointed archbishop of Canterbury, 1532.

The Convocations agree to the divorce, 1533.

Armed with the decision of the spiritualty of England in his favour, Henry turned to Parliament to make clear the legal and national grounds on which he was proposing to neglect the decision of the pope on Catherine's appeal, and enforce that of the national court in England. On the 10th of April the second great anti-papal statute was passed—the act in restraint of Appeals (24 Hen. VIII., c. 12)—which took away the right of the pope to hear certain

The act in restraint of Appeals, 1533.

causes on appeal from England. The preamble to the statute laid down clearly the principles on which it proceeded. Seeing, said the Parliament, 'that England has always been looked upon as an empire, governed by a king, to whom the body politic in its several parts of spiritualty and temporalty owes obedience apart from any foreign power, so that the spiritualty determine all matters of spiritual learning and the law divine, and the ministers and judges of the temporalty administer the law temporal concerning property and order'; and since from time to time statutes have been made to restrain annoyances from the see of Rome as well as from other foreign powers; and since great inconveniences still arise from the system of appeals to Rome, it is enacted that causes testamentary and matrimonial, and questions of tithes and fees shall be tried within the king's jurisdiction, and any one pursuing an appeal in such a cause to a foreign power shall be subject to a præmunire. Appeals in England were to go from the archdeacon to the bishop, from the bishop to the archbishop, and questions touching the king to the upper house of Convocation in the last resort. By the statute the right of the pope to hear appeals from England was reduced to the dimensions which it occupied before the cases of Anselm and Becket. Nothing was said as to any right which might still belong to him as chief bishop of the west to decide cases touching the faith and worship of the Church. All that the statute did was to sweep away the appellate business concerning property and wills and the laws of marriage which had grown up in the Middle Ages, and deny that it appertained to the pope by inherent right.

Having thus entrenched himself behind the spirit of English patriotism and the facts of legal history, Henry was now ready for the last act of the tragedy to begin. By the 5th of April the two Convocations had pronounced his marriage with Catherine spiritually void. On the 10th of April the Appeals act passed into law. On the 29th of May Cranmer, sitting as president of his archiepiscopal court at Dunstable, set aside the marriage with Catherine as legally null

Cranmer pronounces the divorce, 1533.

and void, and declared that with Anne Boleyn good and valid. Side by side with the proceedings in England the appeal of Catherine to Clement at Rome was dragging itself along to a diametrically opposite conclusion. On the 11th of July 1533 the pope declared the marriage with Anne Boleyn null and void, and on the 23rd of March 1534 he affirmed the validity of the marriage with Catherine, and called upon Henry to take her back.

The pope refuses the divorce, 1534.

Thus by the beginning of the year 1534 the breach with Rome was complete, in the sense that the administrative authority of the pope over England had been taken away, and provision made for neglecting his spiritual censures did he proceed to inflict them. But as yet no act had been done which in any way was directed against any spiritual prerogative which the pope might be held to have in questions of faith, morals, or worship, or struck at any right or privilege customarily exercised by him throughout the history of the Church of England. There was no formal breach in the unity of western Christendom, though there was a claim on the part of England of a right to insist that an alteration of relations in certain points should be accepted. Probably neither Henry nor Clement thought for a moment that any permanent breach would result. They were merely carrying on a war-game with one another just as kings and popes in the Middle Ages were accustomed to do. It was no strange thing in the Middle Ages for a state or its ruler to be under excommunication by the pope. During the struggle between pope and emperor, and during the Great Schism, anti-popes were supported for many years together by those who wished to deal a shrewd blow at the Roman pontiff. But nobody intended to bring about an alteration in religion when they embarked on a quarrel with the pope. When the cause of the quarrel was over they came back to the fold contentedly enough. When Henry began his anti-papal policy, when Clement determined not to quarrel with the emperor, both of them no doubt expected that the history of the quarrel with England would be like the history of the

Real meaning of the breach with Rome.

quarrel with Germany three centuries earlier, and end as quarrels usually do—in a reconciliation. They forgot that the desire for independence was planted deep in the English nature, and had been nourished by the facts of English history. They forgot that in a character like that of Henry VIII. the taste of power invariably whets the appetite for more. They forgot that the presence of doctrinal revolt in other Teutonic countries could not fail powerfully to influence the constitutional revolt of England.

The year 1534 was employed by Henry in confirming and strengthening the national position which he had adopted in the previous years. The submission of the clergy, agreed to in 1532, was embodied in an act of Parliament (25 Hen VIII., c. 19), which besides enacting the submission in a slightly more stringent form than it had been agreed upon by Convocation, went on to complete the provisions respecting appeals. No appeals were to go to Rome after Easter 1534, and a final appeal in England, for lack of justice in the archbishop's court, was given to a court known as the court of Delegates, consisting of special commissioners appointed by the crown to hear and determine the particular case, following the principle of the provisions laid down in the Constitutions of Clarendon. It was further specially provided that all canons, not contrary to the laws of the realm and the king's prerogative, should remain in force until the commission of thirty-two persons had revised the canon law. Strangely enough this temporary provision is still in force. The revision by the commission has never been completed, and to this day large parts of mediæval canon law form part of the ecclesiastical law of England.

The act of the Submission of the Clergy.

Provisions as to appeals.

The act of the Submission of the Clergy was shortly followed by an amending act in restraint of the payment of Annates (25 Hen. VIII, c. 20), which explained and made clear the procedure henceforward to be adopted for the election and consecration of bishops. By it bishops were as heretofore to be nominated by the crown, elected by the chapter or convent under *congé d'élire* from the crown,

The second Annates act, 1534.

confirmed and consecrated by the metropolitan, and when so elected or consecrated were to sue out their temporalities from the crown and take the oath of homage. Finally, enthronisation in his cathedral church made the newly consecrated prelate a full and complete bishop. So far no alteration was made in the system which had regularly prevailed since the days of John. But during the Middle Ages it had been customary for the popes to signify their consent to the consecration of bishops by granting certain bulls and receiving certain fees; and to assert their authority over them by exacting an oath before the bulls were granted. A mediæval bishop accordingly took two oaths, one to the king and one to the pope, and as time went on it became increasingly difficult to reconcile the language of the two. Further, since the coming of S. Augustine it had been usual for the popes to give the pall to metropolitans, and it was considered irregular for any metropolitan to exercise his office until he had received the pall. But in the relations now existing between England and the papacy it was obvious that no requests for papal favours could be made, and no oaths of fealty to the pope permitted, and the act accordingly provided that no archbishop or bishop elect should procure from the pope any palls, briefs, or bulls, or pay to him any annates. When no bulls were required no oaths would be tendered. Thus the English Church asserted, in the spirit of the preamble of the Appeals statute, its competency to elect and consecrate its own chief officers without interference.

Provisions as to the appointment of bishops.

In so doing, it was merely returning to the practice which obtained before the Norman Conquest. For five hundred years bishops had been nominated by the crown in England and consecrated by the Church without asking for any bull of approval from the pope. But in the matter of the pall a further step was taken. Ever since the Church of England had existed it had been an invariable custom for its metropolitans to receive the pall from the pope. The want of a pall had been considered one of the most serious blemishes

in the canonical character of Stigand. It was true that the grant of the pall was in itself only a mark of honour, was unknown in the first four centuries of the history of the Church, and had in reality no doctrinal or constitutional significance whatever. But the custom of applying for it was one which had been universally followed in England since the days of Augustine. In abolishing it the Church and realm of England showed that they were prepared not merely to set back the papacy, as it were, to the condition in which it was with regard to England before the coming of the Normans, but to reduce it to its position in the earlier centuries of the Christian era. The appeal was no longer to be solely to the historical precedents of the English Church but to primitive antiquity itself.

While Parliament was thus, perhaps half unconsciously, taking the first step towards laying down the principle of the appeal to antiquity so characteristic of the English Reformation, Convocation was striding boldly in the same direction. In the spring of the year both Convocations passed a resolution to the effect that 'the bishop of Rome hath not by Scripture any greater authority in England than any other foreign bishop.' Such a statement left untouched any primacy or authority which the popes might have acquired through the dignity of their position or by consent or custom of the Church. It denied the doctrine of a divine prerogative of rule inherent in the popes, because given to S. Peter, by asserting that Scripture contains no evidence of such a prerogative. In this it is not difficult to discern the hand of Cranmer, whose mind tended in the direction of basing the justification of the Reformation theologically upon Scripture and antiquity, as did that of Henry to base it constitutionally on historical precedent. It is significant that when Convocation met again in the autumn of the year 1534, the archbishop quietly dropped the title of Legate of the Holy See in his style.

Denial of the scriptural character of the papacy by the Convocations, 1534.

Papal dispensation soon met a similar fate to that which had overtaken papal bulls. By the act in exoneration of exactions

paid to Rome (25 Hen. VIII. c. 21), it was provided that in future no fee or payment should be made to the pope, and no dispensations or licences sued from him, but accustomed licences should be granted by the archbishop of Canterbury. It was especially added that the act 'was not to be interpreted as intending to decline or vary from the congregation of Christ's Church in anything concerning the very articles of the Catholic Faith, but only to make an ordinance for the good conservation of the realm in peace, unity, and tranquillity from ravin and spoil.' Thus fell at one blow the whole structure of papal indulgences and dispensations, which had been built up so carefully during the Middle Ages by the papal lawyers. Partly, no doubt, they had been necessary relaxations of wisely strict laws. More often, it must be admitted, they were lucrative relaxations of unnecessarily strict laws, and had done much to degrade and obscure the spiritual side of practical daily religion. The abolition of the whole system was the first of the great gains reaped by the English Church from the Reformation.

The Dispensations act, 1534.

In the autumn session of the same year a parliamentary addition was made to the doctrine of the royal supremacy. By the Supreme Head act (26 Hen. VIII. c. 1) it was declared that for the greater confirmation of the supremacy, already acknowledged by the clergy, 'the king should be accepted as the only supreme head on earth of the Church of England, and as such should have the power to visit and amend all abuses and heresies, which by any manner spiritual authority or jurisdiction ought to be redressed and amended, notwithstanding any custom, foreign laws, or foreign authority to the contrary.' This statute added, by parliamentary authority alone, a visitatorial power to the ecclesiastical headship of the crown, which had been recognised by the Convocations in 1531. It marks the beginning of Henry's tyranny over the Church by means of the supremacy, just as the Verbal Treasons act of the same session marks the beginning of his tyranny over the State. Like the Verbal Treasons act it was repealed in subsequent

The Supreme Head act, 1534.

reigns, and never revived, though the visitatorial power was retained for a hundred years later, and discharged by the court of High Commission, which was not finally declared to be unconstitutional until the Long Parliament of 1640.

For two eventful years the legislative energy of Parliament slackened in ecclesiastical matters. The royal thunderbolts slept. During that time the unhappy pontificate of Clement VII. had come to an end, and Paul III. sat in the chair of Peter. More of a statesman in his outlook on the world, he was hastier in temper, less subtle in negotiation. Instead of waiting for the great healer, Time, to assuage the wounds of war, he could not contain his anger at the execution of Fisher and More, and determined to meet threat with threat. He prepared a bull of excommunication[1] and deprivation, and procured its acceptance by the cardinals in the autumn of 1535. It was an open secret that he was only waiting for a favourable opportunity to make it public. That was not the way to deal with the tiger king. It was difficult to lead Henry, impossible to intimidate him. The death of Catherine, in January 1536, followed by the execution of Anne Boleyn on May 19, did not bring pope and king any nearer together by removing the original causes of disagreement. Indeed the marriage of Henry with Jane Seymour made him more anti-papal than ever, and in the summer of 1536 the final blow was dealt. The 'Act for extirpating the authority of the bishop of Rome' merely provided, in one short clause, that every layman or ecclesiastic holding office should take an oath renouncing the bishop of Rome and his authority under the penalty of high treason. The language of the statute, like that of most statutes of the time, is vague, but it was clearly intended to defend by penalty the position already taken up, not to alter it. It is not a fresh movement against the pope, but a fresh fortification thrown up against a threatened attack.

Bull of excommunication prepared by Paul III., 1535.

Final act against the pope, 1536.

[1] It seems probable that the bull was never promulgated at all.

The breach was now complete between England and the papacy, yet it would be hazardous to assert that the churches of England and Rome were not in communion with one another. Certainly no step had been as yet taken by the Church or realm of England which, in the opinion of the nation or its leaders, in any way tended in the direction of disloyalty to the principles of the Catholic Church. Both had distinctly pledged themselves to the theory that the Church, as nationally organised in England, had the right of electing, consecrating, and giving jurisdiction to its own bishops and metropolitans, of hearing and deciding its own ecclesiastical appeals, of limiting by its own regulations the ecclesiastical legislation which was binding upon it, of granting its own dispensations and faculties, without any interference from outside authority. The spiritualty of England had gone further, and denied the alleged Scriptural foundation of the opposing theory of the prerogative of Peter. They had, in fact, repudiated one among many theories of the papacy held in the Middle Ages, and taken away the rights of administration which the popes had gradually acquired. But they were careful to explain that in doing this they were not in any way deviating from the principles of the Catholic Church. They were still as 'obedient, devout, humble children of Holy Church as any people be within any realm christened.' They repudiated the idea that they were intending to 'vary from the congregation of Christ's Church in any things concerning the very articles of the Catholic Faith of Christendom.'

The effect of the breach with Rome.

It has often been asserted that Henry VIII. in his breach with Rome abolished the papal Church in England, and established a new church, partly royal, partly Protestant. Such a theory will not bear historical investigation for a moment. There never was, in any true sense of the word, a papal Church in England; but for nine hundred years there had been planted in England the Catholic Church of Christ, over which, during the last four hundred years, the popes had gradually acquired certain

Did Henry VIII. found a new Church?

administrative rights which were now abolished. There was no new Church established. As we have seen, all that was done, in fact, was to abolish certain lately acquired rights of the pope, and revive certain long-established and often exercised powers of the crown. If words are to be taken as in any way expressing intention, the idea of establishing any new Church was expressly and in terms repudiated. If any further proof was needed it would be found in the characters and religious opinions of the men who took a leading part in carrying out the royal policy. Gardiner, Bonner, Heath, and Tunstall, men who were firmly attached not merely to Catholicism but to mediæval expressions of Catholicism, were all members of the Convocations, and the majority of them of the Parliaments, which are responsible for the breach with Rome. It is impossible to believe that they knowingly took part in establishing a new Church, still more impossible that they did it without knowing it. However strong the influence of the crown, however subservient the royal nominees in the Commons, it is incredible that Englishmen had become so poor-spirited as not to strike a blow, or even raise a protest in favour of their religion, did they believe it to be attacked. Men were found ready enough to go to the stake, in the days of Mary, for anti-sacramental doctrine which they believed to be true. They were willing to die the loathsome death of a traitor for the doctrine of the prerogative of the pope, which they believed to be true, in the days of Elizabeth. Is it credible that they should have remained supine and quiescent in the days of Henry if they had believed that the abolition of the papal claims had cut them off from the body of Christ's Church? Is it conceivable that the only martyrs which the devout Church of England could find in the days of her temptation were the few monks whose tender consciences scrupled at the exact wording of the formula of the supremacy?

An apostacy so universal is in itself incredible. There is one theory, and one theory only, on which the Church of England can be said to have fallen from the Catholic Faith in her repudiation of the authority of the pope. It is the modern ultramontane

theory of the papacy, which looks upon the pope as the source and fountain of all true ecclesiastical authority. No archbishop or bishop has, according to this theory, rightful jurisdiction unless he exercises it under the direction of the pope. It is obvious that if this theory is true the Church of England, which proceeded avowedly on the exactly opposite theory, must fall. But the theory is one which was unknown in the primitive ages, unrecognised by the undivided Church, strongly protested against in the Middle Ages, unacknowledged to this day by the Orthodox Churches of the east, and unaccepted even by the Church of Rome in its fulness until the Vatican council of 1870. If the Church of England is to be condemned on a theory like this, she is content to remain condemned in company with the vast majority of saints and doctors and confessors of the Church in all ages.

Yet, beyond question, a break in the unity of Christendom, which soon led to considerable religious divergence and strong political hatred, which intensified national quarrels, exacerbated religious strife, and irretrievably weakened the cause of religion in the world, did result from the action taken by England and by Rome in these eventful years. No one can take even a hasty glance at the religious and political history of the last three hundred years, without recognising that the hostility between England and Rome has been an abiding and fruitful cause of tyranny, of disunion, of sin, of indifference, and of infidelity. Even now it is among the greatest of hindrances to the effective presentation of the gospel of Christ, both to the heathen and to the educated. It has necessarily drawn off much of the best intellectual effort on both sides into the barren paths of controversy. To this day it largely, though more indirectly, affects the settlement of every important political question. To say this is not to underrate the advantages which England gained from the Reformation, still less is it to say that the Reformation was unjustifiable. It is merely to enforce the obvious truth that division, however we may palliate it, is after all a sin, and carries with it the consequences of sin. It is an unprofitable task to try and apportion the share of blame to be attached to each side in

The break in unity.

the quarrel. If there was worldliness and pride, political subserviency and corruption on the one side, there was ambition and obstinacy, ruthlessness and injustice on the other. It is as impossible, in the light of modern knowledge, to say that England was wholly right and Rome wholly wrong, as it is to assert the exact contrary. The truthful historian may well decline the task of pronouncing a final judgment between the combatants, and will content himself with saying to the angry champions on both sides: 'He that is without sin among you let him cast the first stone.'

NOTE A

THE PAPAL SUPREMACY

The phrase, 'the papal supremacy,' is a convenient one to express the practical result of the successful assertion of the whole body of claims made, and from time to time enforced, by the pope over the Church of England in the Middle Ages; but it is not historically accurate. No 'supremacy' was in so many words either claimed by the popes or allowed by the nation, as it would have been contrary to the admitted 'supremacy' of the king. But the various claims of jurisdiction exercised by the popes did in practice amount to an authority in ecclesiastical matters, which, though controllable by law, was, except in rare cases, in fact supreme; and may justly be called 'supremacy' for convenience sake.

That authority resulted from three separate classes of claims.

(1) Those of a temporal nature, derived partly from the forged donation of Constantine, by which all the islands of the west were said to belong to the Apostolic See: and partly from the historical submission of John to Innocent III. in 1213, by which England became a fief of the papacy as far as the action of the king could make it so. These claims were uniformly repudiated by both the king and the nation whenever the king was a strong ruler and the nation able to express its wishes. For instance, William I. refused to do homage to Gregory VII. In 1366 king and Parliament finally repudiated the alleged vassalage to the papacy, and refused to pay the tribute agreed to be paid by John. In 1399 king and Parliament asserted in the statute of Præmunire that 'the Church of England hath been so free at all times that it hath been in no earthly subjection, but

immediately subject to God in all things touching the regality of the same crown and to none other.' In 1533, in the statute in restraint of Appeals, they stated that 'this realm of England is an empire, and hath so been accepted in the world, governed by one supreme head and king having the dignity and royal estate of the imperial crown of the same.' There is no need to multiply instances. It would not be seriously contended by any well-informed writer at the present day, that the popes ever acquired any permanent rights of government over the English Church or nation under this head.

(2) Those of an *administrative* nature, which were made in virtue of the claim of the popes to be the Heads of the Visible Church by Divine appointment. These included rights of appointing bishops, appointing and sending legates, holding visitations and synods, granting of the pall to metropolitans, hearing cases on appeal, taxing the clergy, appointing to benefices by provision, granting dispensations and privileges, granting and refusing bulls for the consecration of bishops, etc. Most of these were not exercised at all before the Norman Conquest. The only one which was exercised with regularity from the time of Augustine to the Reformation was that of granting the pall. The majority of the others became gradually established in the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries, especially during the reigns of Stephen and Henry III., when the papacy was strong and the crown weak. Some of them, such as the right to send legates and hold synods apart from the permission of the crown, were never established at all, while others, such as the right of granting dispensations and hearing appeals, were freely exercised from the twelfth century. Against all of them, except that of sending the pall, protests were made from time to time either by the king or by Parliament or by both, and some of those protests were embodied in formal legislation. William I., according to Eadmer, distinctly claimed the right of deciding between rival popes and of refusing to admit papal letters, and subsequent kings enforced it. The Constitutions of Clarendon, under Henry II., the remonstrances of Parliament against papal taxation, and the statutes of Provisors and Præmunire in the fourteenth century, are more conspicuous examples of such legislation. These claims, therefore, never formed part of the law or custom of the constitution in England, and their successful exercise depended upon the connivance of the king. They were repudiated by the Reformation Parliament of 1529 with the acquiescence of Convocation, re-enacted in the second year of Mary, 1554, and finally abolished at the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth.

(3) Claims of a *spiritual* nature, which were made in virtue of the claims of the popes to be Heads of the Visible Church by Divine appointment. The spiritual headship of the pope was seldom questioned in the Middle Ages, but its extent was not at all accurately defined. It was generally believed that S. Peter exercised a primacy of government over the other apostles, and that the popes as his successors had inherited the powers which he enjoyed. But when questions arose as to the exact nature of these powers, considerable differences of opinion manifested themselves. Supporters of the hierarchical theories of the Church maintained, as the popes themselves maintained, the most exalted ideas of the papal authority in spiritual matters. S. Thomas Aquinas says: 'In order that the spiritual be kept separate from the earthly, the office of this—*i.e.* the spiritual kingdom—is committed not to the earthly kings but to the priests, and above all to the chief priest, the successor of Peter, the vicegerent of Christ, the Roman bishop, to whom is due the subjection of all kings, and of the Christian people even as to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.' And again: 'It is necessary to have some supreme authority in matters of faith. This authority resides in the pope, in whom is realised the unity of the Church and the presence of the divine government. To him therefore is entrusted the power to control and to revise the ordinances of religion. He has even competence to promulgate a new confession of faith, in order to prevent the rise of erroneous beliefs.'[1] Lesser men suffered themselves to go to such a length in this direction that Augustin Trionfo, writing in the fourteenth century, says of the pope: 'From his will there is no appeal, not even to the judgment of God, for the utterance of the pope is identical with that of God. An appeal to God is therefore worse than futile, it convicts the appellant of rebellion against the divine government of the universe.' In opposition to exaggerated statements like these, some writers were found bold enough to deny the whole papal argument altogether. Marsiglio of Padua in his *Defensor Pacis*, written at the end of the thirteenth century, refused to admit that S. Peter had any superiority at all over the other apostles, or was proved ever to have been bishop of Rome, much less to have endowed the popes with a prerogative of government as his successors. But the majority of the opponents of the papacy were not prepared to go so far. While admitting in principle the spiritual headship of the pope as the normal guarantee and evidence of the unity of the Church, they maintained that his power as such visible Head was of a constitutional and not of an autocratic character. William of Occam contended

[1] See Poole, *Illustrations of the History of Mediæval Thought*, chap. viii.

that the pope even in the discharge of his spiritual functions was subject to the general voice of Christendom. The French reform party at the councils of Pisa and Constance maintained that the Church assembled in general council had an inherent right to preserve its own unity even against the pope, and to compel the pope to obedience. The pope in their view was normally the chief executive officer of the Church, but subject to control and punishment by the Church if he failed to exercise his functions rightfully. This constitutional view of the papal spiritual headship seems to have been the one recognised in England before the Norman Conquest. Northumbria ignored the papal decision in Wilfrid's case, and Dunstan refused to absolve an offender when commanded to do so by the pope. Even in the later Middle Ages it was by no means forgotten. The English lawyers always maintained that papal law was not binding in England, even on questions of faith and morals, unless it had been accepted by the national authorities. Papal excommunications were frequently disregarded. At the Reformation, however, the English Church was not content with merely vindicating the constitutional character of the papal headship. It expressly denied the alleged commission to S. Peter on which the headship itself rests as a Divine institution. In 1534 both Convocations passed, almost without a dissentient voice, a resolution affirming that 'the Bishop of Rome hath not by Scripture any greater authority over the Church of England than any other foreign bishop.' It is worth notice that, shortly before this proposition was introduced into Convocation, the *Defensor Pacis* of Marsiglio of Padua was reprinted and largely circulated.

It would seem therefore that the position taken up by the English Church on the whole question is this:

(1) It has formally denied that the pope has any primacy of government, either spiritual or temporal, over the English Church in virtue of any words or facts recorded in the Bible; but short of this it is not committed to any particular view as to the alleged primacy of S. Peter over the other apostles, or as to the relations between S. Peter and the Roman Church.

(2) It has not asserted anything at all with regard to any primacy of government or primacy of dignity which may have become attached to the papacy by ecclesiastical development in the course of ages, excepting that such primacy, if it exists, does not necessarily involve either the rights of a temporal nature which were repudiated in the Middle Ages, or those of an administrative nature which were repudiated at the Reformation.

(3) It has not asserted anything at all with regard to any spiritual headship of the pope as the normal guarantee and evidence of Church unity in the west, but it would seem from the course of English history, both before and after the Reformation, that such spiritual headship, if it exists, must in the view of the Church of England be interpreted as involving constitutional and not autocratic power.

CHAPTER XII

THE ROYAL TYRANNY

A.D. 1534-1547

WHEN Henry VIII. emerged from his successful struggle with the papacy, he found himself absolute and uncontrolled master of England. During the Middle Ages the popes had sometimes supported the cause of national liberty against the crown, and more often been on the side of the crown against national liberty, but, whatever the particular policy of the moment might have been, they had always represented a power wider than the nation with which the crown had had to reckon. That power was now placed among the other foreign powers of Europe, and within the limits of his own territories Henry had only to deal with national forces and national institutions. Of those institutions, the three most important were now reduced to submission to his will. The law was wholly at his command. Not a judge would dare to pronounce a decision, not a jury to find a verdict, contrary to the known wishes of the king. To be accused by the crown was to be condemned by the law. Parliament was somewhat more independent, for though the upper House consisted largely of those who owed their position and their fortunes to the king, and the lower House contained a majority of royal nominees, yet Henry always recognised that there were limits beyond which he could not press his authority. But, practically, as long as he abstained from severe taxation, as long as the country continued prosperous under his rule, he need not fear that Parliament would refuse to carry out his measures, however rudely they

Predominant position of the crown, 1534.

might press upon the rights of property or of conscience. The Church was in a somewhat worse position, for the limits of its obedience were less clearly defined. The formula of the supremacy was capable of many different interpretations, and, as each successive encroachment was made by the crown, it was found impossible to argue with the master of thirty legions as to whether it was or was not intended to be contained in the original bond. The rights of the nation had been secured in Parliament for two hundred and fifty years. Personal liberty had been guaranteed to Englishmen by the Great Charter. Yet Henry acted towards personal and Parliamentary rights in a way which all historians admit to have been absolutely unconstitutional, and made Parliament the accomplice of his tyranny. It was not likely that he would act more constitutionally in his treatment of the agreement of 1531 than he did in his treatment of the Great Charter, or be more careful of the rights of the Church than he was of the rights of the nation.

Indeed, as a matter of fact, his treatment of both proceeded on identical principles, for it sprang from identical causes.

Principles of the Tudor government.

Successful as his policy had been, Henry was well aware that there were still serious elements of danger which might break out into open hostility. The divorce of Catherine, the placing of power in the hands of new men, the alliance with France, and the consequent check to the lucrative trade with Flanders, were all unpopular acts. If combined with the distrust of the anti papal policy felt vaguely among the clergy, they might lead to a dangerous opposition could a leader be found. Henry determined that no such leader should be found, and no opposition permitted to gather head. He would fortify and guard the exercise of his will by penal laws. He would force every man to declare the inner secrets of his heart by exacting oaths of adherence to the royal policy. He would crush all open hostility by violence, and terrify secret murmurings into silence. Yet no one knew better than he that force by itself was no remedy. The disobedient even in thought were to be extirpated, but the obedient to be encouraged and rewarded,

the doubtful won, the nation well ruled. Beyond the limits of the immediate necessities of the government, tyranny was to bow its head before careful and intelligent rule. This is the paradox of the Tudor government. Within certain limits it was frankly tyrannical, outside them it was patriotic and enlightened. It was glorious for the nation, terrible for the individual. It was constitutional in its forms, arbitrary in its results, but when most oppressive it was never blind in its aim, but was directed to a definite object.

In carrying out this policy, new in the history of England, Henry was fortunate enough to find ready to his hand an able and unscrupulous agent. Thomas Cromwell was one of the products of the Renaissance in its Italian rather than its English type. Unhampered by traditional views of religion or ethics, he was prepared to find his whole code of morality satisfied by the diligent service of power. A pure adventurer, he had fought his way manfully and unscrupulously through life, partly as an agent, partly as a money-lender, until he reached the lowest rung of the political ladder by entering the service of Wolsey in the days of his omnipotence. He was employed by the cardinal as his chief agent in carrying out the suppression of the small religious houses, and in the building of Ipswich School and Cardinal's College, and did his work to the complete satisfaction of his master and with considerable profit to himself. On the fall of Wolsey he offered his services to the king, was employed by him in packing the House of Commons in 1529, and in realising the confiscated property of the cardinal. Everything that he did, he did well. Henry was delighted with his business capacity, and, as the incompetence of his nominal ministers, such as Norfolk, came into clearer light, he took Cromwell more and more into his confidence, entrusted him more and more with political business, and eventually put into his hands the whole management of his dealings with the clergy. But Henry was never for one moment deceived as to the character or status of his minister. From first to last he was a tool, and nothing more. Like Cranmer, a most valuable and

Thomas Cromwell.

serviceable tool, always to be depended upon when in use. Unlike Cranmer, a tool with plenty of ambition and no religion of his own, and therefore a dangerous tool to keep when its work was done. Never did any man more cynically kick away the ladder by which he had climbed to power, than did Henry discard Cromwell when he had finished using him and got all that he could out of him.

For seven years, while Henry's ecclesiastical policy was being carried through, the brain of Cromwell put into shape, and the hands of Cromwell carried into effect, what the will of Henry had decreed. They were years of the grossest tyranny to individuals. In the spring of 1534 a half-crazed woman named Elizabeth Barton, who had attracted some notice in Kent by prophesying the death of Henry for having divorced Catherine of Arragon, was executed for high treason under an act of Attainder. In the first session of that year a statute was passed to make sure the succession of the crown to Anne Boleyn and her children. It denounced the penalties of high treason against all who, by writing or exterior act, did anything to slander the marriage with Anne Boleyn; and required all persons to take an oath to observe the act. No form of oath was prescribed by the act, so the Privy Council drew up different forms of oath for different classes of persons. Members of Parliament and officials were required to swear to a form, which included the statement that the marriage of Henry and Catherine was illegal and invalid, and a repudiation of the authority of the pope. This Fisher, bishop of Rochester, and Sir Thomas More, the late chancellor, could not conscientiously do. Though they professed their willingness to swear allegiance to the succession in Anne and her children, they were committed to the Tower. This was the first instance in English history of the punishment of thought in political matters by the government apart from action. For the religious houses a more stringent form of oath was drawn up, which required the inmates not only to accept, but to preach,

Tyranny of Henry.

The Nun of Kent, 1534.

The act of Succession, 1534.

Imprisonment of Fisher and More.

the validity of the marriage with Anne, to acknowledge the supremacy of the crown, and to deny that the pope had any greater authority in England than any other bishop. Tyrannical as these oaths were, they were almost universally taken. Among the officials Fisher and More were the only important objectors. Of the monks and friars, only the Friars Observant of Greenwich and Richmond persisted in their refusal, and that was, outwardly at any rate, on the technical ground that the statement about the pope's authority was contrary to the rule of S. Francis to which they had already sworn. Their houses were suppressed, and the inmates either imprisoned or dispersed among other convents.

Emboldened by this success Henry proceeded, in December 1534, to a further step. By the Verbal Treasons act any wish expressed or words spoken calculated to deprive the crown of its dignity involved the speaker in the penalties of high treason. Thus if any one questioned in conversation the right of the crown to be supreme head of the Church or even defender of the faith, he became liable to execution as a traitor. Having gained this atrocious power Henry did not let it sleep. In May 1535 the priors of the London Charterhouse, who had repented of taking the oath against the pope the year before, and Reynolds an Austin friar, were executed on this plea. On June 19th three other Carthusian monks followed them to the gallows. On June 22nd came the turn of a more illustrious victim. Fisher, bishop of Rochester, had in the previous month received from Paul III. the unwelcome honour of a cardinal's hat. When Henry heard of it, he swore that when the hat arrived in England there should be no head on which to place it. He kept his word. Fisher was publicly examined, in the hope of inducing him to say something which would bring him under the Verbal Treasons act, but he steadily maintained his willingness to swear to the succession in Elizabeth, and as steadily refused to say why he would not swear to anything further. At last Rich, the king's solicitor-

The Verbal Treasons act, 1534.

Execution of the Carthusians, 1535.

Execution of Fisher, June 22.

general, one of the vilest of the vile instruments of Henry's tyranny, visited the bishop in his prison under guise of friendship, and extracted from him in an unguarded moment an admission that he did not accept the supreme headship of the king. This was enough, and on the 22nd of June his head rolled in the dust. A few days afterwards Sir Thomas More, the most attractive personality of an unattractive age—a man admired by all and beloved by all; learned, witty, brilliant, devout; compared to the cruel king who shed his blood, Hyperion to a satyr—followed his friend to the scaffold. He like Fisher was the victim of the friendly confidences of Rich, but, lawyer-like, he had distrusted the officious solicitor-general and refused to answer his questions. It made no difference. Rich only added the sin of perjury to that of hypocrisy, and detailed in the witness-box a conversation which had never taken place. When the news got abroad a thrill of horror seized Europe. Even Henry felt for the time fear, if not compunction, and sent round to foreign courts a lying story of a conspiracy against his throne, which everybody accepted and nobody believed.

Execution of More, July 6.

In the early part of the year 1535 Henry determined to use the visitatorial powers of the crown, lately recognised by Parliament as being in him by the Supreme Head act of 1534, in a way which must have astonished a good many of those who had unthinkingly passed it. He delegated them to Cromwell by appointing him vicar general by letters patent, and claimed for him in virtue of that appointment a superior jurisdiction to that of the archbishops and bishops in their provinces and dioceses. According to the view now acted upon by Henry, the crown was in fact chief ordinary, and bishops exercised their jurisdiction by its authority, though they discharged their spiritual functions in virtue of their consecration. Henry never claimed that he in any sense gave to bishops the power of confirming and ordaining, but he did distinctly claim the right of laying down the conditions under which those powers should be exercised, and of

Appointment of Cromwell to be vicar-general.

authorising their exercise, as well as that of granting to them the authority to administer discipline. In so doing he was acting in a way wholly unauthorised by the constitution either of the Church or of the State. The supremacy of the crown, whatever its exact limits, was a personal authority inherent in the sovereign as Christian Prince, and involved a personal responsibility which could no more be delegated than could the crown itself. The claim to do so was wholly novel. The office of vicar-general to the crown was unknown to history. Yet the recognition of the supremacy both in Convocation and Parliament was expressly asserted to be the vindication of old rights, not the claiming of new. The assumption that the crown was the fountain of ecclesiastical jurisdiction as of civil justice, was one which was incompatible with the existence of the Church as an independent organisation. Though acquiesced in for the time by the Church, it was a stretch of arbitrary power similar in character to the issue of royal proclamations with the force of law, to the disposal of the crown by will by Henry VIII., and to the demand of ship money by Charles I.—acts contrary to the rights of a free people, and admitted by all to be unconstitutional, even though authorised by Parliament or sanctioned by the law. That it was in its nature unconstitutional has been tacitly admitted, for though the theory on which it was based has been held by many statesmen, the appointment of a vicar-general has never been repeated.

Its unconstitutional character.

The appointment of Cromwell was the immediate preliminary to a campaign against the monasteries. Whatever remained of papal influence in England was to be found among the monks and the friars. They were rich, unpopular, and not particularly useful. Their wealth if seized by the king would enable him to bind his new nobility firmly to himself and his policy by the grant of abbey lands, and pay the ever-increasing expenses of a sumptuous court without imposing unpopular taxation. So their destruction was decided upon. In September 1535 Cromwell as vicar-

Visitation of the religious houses, Sept. 1535-Feb 1536.

general announced that he was about to hold on behalf of the crown a general visitation of the universities and religious houses, and on the 18th of the month he issued a general inhibition prohibiting the bishops from holding any visitation of their own while that of the crown was proceeding. During the autumn of the year the visitation took place. At the universities little was done except to establish a lecture in Greek. Of the religious houses, some of those in Kent, in the eastern counties, in the midlands, and in Yorkshire, were visited by commissioners acting under Cromwell's authority. The commissioners in all cases took an inventory of the property, and inquired into the conduct of the inmates. In some cases they offered to the superior of the convent a deed of surrender to the king duly prepared for his signature. Sometimes, if that was refused, they procured the resignation of the superior and the election of a person who was willing to sign such a surrender.

By the time Parliament met in February 1536, Henry had received information from the commissioners affecting about a third of the religious houses in England. He did not lay this information directly before Parliament, but made a declaration to the Houses which was stated to be based on the reports of the commissioners. On this Parliament, after much debate and stimulated by the royal threats, voted to the king's use all religious houses having an income of less than £200 a year, and gave legal sanction to the 'voluntary surrenders' already made. At the same time it drew a strong distinction between these small and corrupt houses and the larger ones where 'religion is right well kept and observed.' From the date of the passing of the act the visitation and the dissolution went on together. But at first the commissioners for the dissolution were chosen from the country gentry as well as from Cromwell's men. Instead of suppressing the religious houses they began to petition the king for their continuance, and reported, in opposition to the reports of the visitors, in favour of the character of the inmates. Accordingly, it was found more convenient to entrust the whole business to

Suppression of the smaller monasteries, Feb. 1536.

Cromwell's emissaries alone, and after that the dissolution proceeded without let or hindrance.

While it was proceeding a terrible tragedy was being enacted at court. Henry had become quickly tired of the queen whom he had risked so much to gain. He had transferred his affections to Jane Seymour, one of her ladies-in-waiting, and wanted only an excuse to rid himself of Anne. A piece of thoughtless frivolity gave him the excuse which he desired. Anne was arrested on May 2nd, tried and condemned by a commission of peers on May 15th for high treason, divorced by Cranmer (probably on the ground of an alleged precontract of marriage) on May 17th, and beheaded on May 19th. On the 20th Henry married Jane Seymour. A month later Convocation, at the instance of Cromwell, approved the sentence of divorce pronounced by Cranmer. On June 30th Parliament passed a statute which repealed the former act of succession, declared the marriage with Anne void and the princess Elizabeth illegitimate, and transferred the whole apparatus of treason law, which the day before guarded the marriage with Anne, to that with her successor. The degradation of Church and State was complete. Of all the gross and foul acts of tyranny of which the history of England makes mention, not one perhaps is stained with a deeper dye than the murder of Anne Boleyn by Henry VIII.

Execution of Anne Boleyn.

Second act of Succession, June 1536.

In the autumn of the year it seemed for a moment as if the hour of retribution had struck. The proceedings of the commissioners in destroying the small religious houses, desecrating the churches, and seizing the ornaments of the altars and the jewels of the shrines, made Englishmen vaguely realise that their religion was in danger. It was the first interference of the king with the daily religious life of the people. It came at a moment when other causes of discontent were at work. Suddenly, for no particular reason, the smouldering disaffection blazed tumultuously into a flame, and in October 30,000 men, collected at Doncaster, had

The Pilgrimage of Grace, Oct. 1536.

England and her king at their mercy. But they were unequal to their opportunity. Norfolk amused them with promises and negotiations while Henry was collecting troops. By the end of the year the position was reversed. Government troops threatened the north, while the rebels were disbanded and disorganised. Losing heart, some of them madly attempted to seize Hull and Beverley. The royal army at once occupied the country. Martial law was proclaimed over the north. All who had taken a prominent part in the movement were executed. The abbots of the great monasteries of Hexham, Whalley, Furness, and Jervaulx, were attainted, and their houses forfeited to the king. The Pilgrimage of Grace was drowned in blood.

The immediate result of the king's triumph was to strike terror into the monks and to quicken the proceedings of the visitors.

Surrender of the larger religious houses, 1537-1538.

During the years 1537 and 1538 the latter were as busily engaged in compelling the larger houses to make voluntary surrenders, as they were in carrying out the dissolution of the smaller houses already condemned. By the time the next Parliament met in the spring of 1539 the work was nearly over. The large majority of the religious houses of England had been already suppressed, their property seized by the king, their lands and tithes in many cases granted by the king to clamorous courtiers. Parliament was only required to set its seal to an accomplished fact. By the act of 1539 (31 Hen. VIII. c. 13) all religious houses were vested in the king, all surrenders already made to him were confirmed, and all grants by him of abbey lands to subjects were pronounced good and valid.

Act confirming the surrenders, 1539.

Thus fell the great institution of monasticism in England, which in earlier ages had done so much to inspire and preserve a high and noble ideal of Christian life. Whatever may be thought as to the necessity of the act—and the evidence in its favour becomes less and less satisfactory the closer it is looked into—there can be but one opinion as to the way in which it was carried out. Never did

Character of the suppression.

great institution fall by more unworthy hands or in a more unworthy manner. The visitors were men of low character, vulgar minds, and doubtful honesty. They came of that peculiar breed of cunning and unscrupulous agents who flock together by instinct when dirty work is to be done. Many of the so-called 'voluntary surrenders' were extracted from the abbots and priors, without consulting the convent, by sheer terrorism, some by actual starvation. Some houses were suppressed without any authority whatever. No notice was paid to the provision in the act of 1536, by which the brethren of the small dissolved houses were to be moved into the larger houses. Most of the larger houses were dissolved on their surrender alone without any parliamentary sanction at all, and in spite of parliamentary testimony in their favour. There was no attempt at judicial procedure, not even a show of discriminating between bad and good. The mixed commissions were stopped just because they wanted to discriminate. And if it is said that the state of the monasteries generally was so bad as to justify the strongest measures, it must be remembered that the only evidence on this point laid by Henry before Parliament referred solely to the smaller houses, was collected from only about a third of England, and that, after hearing it and acting on it, Parliament went out of its way to commend by contrast the state of the larger houses. Yet all met with a similar fate.

The terrible waste.

And how terrible and how needless was the waste! It is pitiable to think of the countless treasures of art and learning wantonly destroyed, the opportunities for the improvement of man deliberately thrown away. That jewelled reliquaries and altar plate should be seized by the greedy king is intelligible enough. That rich embroidered stuffs and costly marbles and ornaments should find their way to private hands was to be expected. But that books should be destroyed, walls pulled down, buildings unroofed, painted windows broken, hospitals and schools closed, and the ruins suffered to become a quarry for the neighbourhood was wanton barbarity worthy only of savage races. Ever since the Reformation the Church of

England, whenever she has been alive to her duties, has busied herself in raising large sums to build and endow all over the country educational, philanthropical, and religious institutions of every conceivable kind. Grammar schools like Harrow and the Charterhouse, hospitals and almshouses like Guy's and Sackville College, orphanages, penitentiaries, training schools, convalescent homes, stud our streets of our larger towns and nestle in the dells and combes of the country parishes. Had the houses from which the religious were driven been preserved to the Church or even to the nation instead of being pulled down and despoiled, the poor man might have had reason to bless instead of to curse the name of Henry VIII. What was wanted in the sixteenth century was adaptation not confiscation. Chichele and Wolsey had pointed out the way, but Henry deliberately refused to follow in their steps. For three centuries England has been trying to replace the capital thus foolishly and wickedly wasted.

Effects of the suppression.

Whether the nation has in the long run profited at all by the dissolution of the religious houses is a question impossible to answer, for it depends upon the powers of adaptation to new needs which monasticism would have shown if reformed and not destroyed. That the poor were the immediate and direct sufferers by the change does not admit of doubt. Besides the actual works of charity and mercy maintained by the monks and the friars, the very existence all over the country of rich and kindly corporations spending their revenues locally could not fail to increase the ease and comfort of life among their neighbours and dependents. Possibly their influence may have been to some extent demoralising. Later generations have learned that doles are the fruitful parents of idleness. But the substitution of absentee courtiers greedy for rent, in the place of easy-going monks tolerant of poverty, had its moral dangers too. It may be questioned whether more harm was not done to the morality of the nation by the dark passions aroused by the courtiers' extortion than ever was occasioned by the idleness produced by the monastic dole. The

Church of England gained directly the six poorly endowed bishoprics of Westminster, Chester, Oxford, Peterborough, Gloucester, and Bristol, but indirectly her losses were far greater than her gains. By the removal of the abbots from the House of Lords her direct influence in the counsels of the nation was much diminished, and has since grown steadily less as the lay peers have increased in number. By the grant of the tithes belonging to the monasteries to lay owners she lost a large part of the endowments originally bestowed upon her by benefactors and subsequently absorbed by the monasteries. Even the king himself can hardly have looked on his work with complete satisfaction, for in spite of the vast sums paid into the court of augmentations between the years 1536 and 1540, we find him in 1544 applying to Parliament to release him once more from his debts.

In the same session in which the suppression of the larger monasteries was sanctioned, perhaps the worst of all the tyrannical acts of the reign, the famous act of the Six Articles, was passed. For some years Henry had been disturbed by the spread of anti-sacramental doctrines in England. In 1538 he had himself presided at the trial of Lambert for holding such opinions, and had condemned him because he refused to accept the doctrine of Transubstantiation in its technical form. In 1539 he determined to root out the evil, and sent Norfolk to Parliament to demand that it should pass a penal statute on six points, affirming the doctrine of Transubstantiation, the sufficiency of Communion in one kind, the necessity of clerical celibacy and vows of chastity, and the desirability of private masses and private confession. The proposal met with a good deal of opposition, especially from Cranmer, and on May 19th Henry found it necessary to come down to the House in person. In his presence the resolution was passed, and a bill to carry it into effect was drawn up and submitted to him, after Convocation had given their sanction to the correctness of the theological statements which it contained. It became law on the 16th of June.

The act of the Six Articles, 1539.

The act awarded the penalty of death by burning to all who by word or writing impugned the doctrine of Transubstantiation as therein defined, without permitting recantation, and made offences against the other articles felony. It stands thus in marked contrast to the old ecclesiastical law, which invariably gave to the accused the opportunity of repentance and amendment, and was directed against the promulgation of false doctrine, not against the holding of it. It is, in fact, the religious counterpart of the Verbal Treasons act of 1534, and is stamped with the special characteristic of Henry's tyranny, in that it attacked thoughts and words, not acts. The work of enforcing it was entrusted to the lay courts, and juries of very ordinary education and knowledge were asked to pronounce upon the subtle distinctions of a man's private theological thought without any expert assistance whatever. The result defeated the king's own objects. So busy were the informers that no less than 500 persons were presented in London alone in the first year, and so ignorant were the tribunals that they were reported to have done 'many things naughtily and foolishly.' The king had to amend his statute by associating theological experts with the judges, and putting a stop to private informers. This made the act more workable, but only mitigated very slightly its inherent tyranny.

Tyranny of the last years of Henry VIII.

For the remaining six years of the reign of Henry VIII., the nation and the Church together bowed their heads to the yoke in the evil days. The king maintained throughout the strictest mediæval orthodoxy in matters of faith, and the most absolute independence and supremacy in matters of government, both ecclesiastical and civil, and was prepared to enforce both ruthlessly, not merely against opposers, but against all whom he suspected of wishing to oppose. In the year 1539 fifteen persons, including the countess of Exeter and five priests, were executed by act of attainder, without evidence of guilt or opportunity of defence. In the following year Cromwell and thirteen others, of whom some were accused of denying the validity of the divorce of

Henry and Catherine, some of heresy in twisting the meaning of Scripture, followed on the same path. In 1541 the aged countess of Salisbury was brought to the scaffold by the same tyrannical means. In 1546 Anne Askew was tortured and burned for denying Transubstantiation. In the same year the gallant Surrey paid with his life for the undeserved jealousy of the sombre tyrant. It is said that altogether during the reign of Henry VIII. no less than 70,000 persons were put to death for offences against the laws. The hand which was pressing so hardly upon individuals pressed equally hardly upon corporations and upon the Church. In the year 1545 colleges, chantries, and free chapels followed in the wake of the religious houses and were confiscated to the king's use. In the same year the claim of the crown to be the source of ecclesiastical jurisdiction was asserted in so many words in an act enabling doctors of civil law to exercise ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The lion, in Sir Thomas More's phrase, had indeed learned his strength. Woe betide any one who, even unwittingly or unwillingly, crossed his path!

Its character and objects.

In every department of government the object aimed at and the methods used were the same—the enforcement of the personal will of the king by sheer terrorism, established by the law. Judges, juries, Parliament, Convocation, instead of being the guardians of freedom, became the accomplices of the tyrant, and helped to rivet the chains on their own necks The mass of the nation who, from indifference or from prudence or station, kept themselves from contact with the government, profited by the strong hand and open purse of the king, and applauded his rule. He who was unfortunate enough, through birth or position, to fall under suspicion, was doomed without hope of mercy. Forced by oath to declare his secret thoughts, accused by hired spies of words spoken without thought, he was convicted by an intimidated jury of verbal treason, and hanged, or of verbal heresy, and burned, or more simply was executed under act of Parliament without being degraded by the farce of a trial or forced to submit to the hypocrisy of a defence. The

same ruin awaited the noblest and the humblest. Under such a government every man and every institution lived merely at the king's will. No principle of justice, no constitutional safeguard availed for them if the government chose to proceed against them. When parliamentary rights, individual rights, and social rights were at the king's mercy, it was not likely that ecclesiastical rights would be spared. The same measure was meted out to the Church, to the constitution, and to the individual, and the constitutional lawyer can no more found the doctrine of the royal supremacy upon the precedents of the reign of Henry VIII. than he can the doctrine of the monarchy itself.

NOTE B

THE DISSOLUTION OF THE RELIGIOUS HOUSES

The researches of historians in recent years, especially those of Canon Dixon and Father Gasquet, have thrown considerable light upon the real motives of Henry VIII. in undertaking the suppression of the religious houses in England, and the nature of the evidence by which that policy was supported.

The justification of the king's policy has been usually sought in the grave moral corruption alleged to have existed in the religious houses amounting to such a public scandal that nothing short of destruction would cure the evil. The evidence for this may be conveniently summarised under the following heads :

1. The reports of visitors, both bishops and legates, in years previous to the royal visitation of 1535.
2. The statement made by the king to the Parliament of 1536, said to be founded on the reports of the royal visitors, and generally known as the Black Book.
3. The statement made by the king to the Pilgrims of Grace at Doncaster that confessions of grave sin had been made by the religious to the royal visitors.
4. The Comperta.

1. *The reports of visitors.*—There is no doubt that previous visitors in their periodical visitations found from time to time cases of religious

houses which had fallen into a low state of morality, and of individuals who had been guilty of grave moral sin. But it is equally clear that, as far as the evidence of the reports goes, these were isolated and occasional cases, and that no charge of general corruption against the religious houses as a whole could be sustained from them.

2. *The Black Book.*—This, unfortunately, does not now exist, nor is it known how it was destroyed, as there is no trustworthy evidence for the common story that queen Mary destroyed it. Its exact contents can therefore only be conjectured. But if it is the identical document laid by Henry before the Parliament of 1536, it is noticeable that it could not have contained evidence against the religious houses as a whole, as the visitors had only completed a hurried visitation of about a third of England by the time that Parliament met. It is certain also that it could not have contained any evidence against the larger monasteries, for the act of 1536, passed by Parliament in consequence of the statements in the Black Book, expressly thanked God that in the larger houses 'religion was right well kept and observed.' It seems also certain that Henry never laid any reports of the visitors before Parliament at all, but only a declaration drawn up by himself and stated by him to be based on what he had heard from the visitors. But if the visitors did make reports of a damnatory character, it is somewhat strange that none of them should have been preserved, and that their contemporary letters, which have been preserved, should show no sign that they had met with grave and serious corruption. It must be remembered, too, that the mixed commissions of local gentry and of Cromwell's agents, appointed at first under the act, reported favourably of many of the houses ordered to be suppressed, and petitioned for their continuance. On the whole, we may conclude that Henry certainly did bring a charge of this nature before the notice of Parliament, but that he did not show Parliament the evidence on which he based it, and that that evidence has now disappeared. But whatever its value may have been, it could only have affected the small monasteries, and was based on evidence collected from about a third of England at the outside.

3. *Confessions.*—There is no evidence whatever extant of the truth or falsehood of the king's statement to the pilgrims at Doncaster about confessions. If any such confessions were ever made to the visitors, he did not think them of sufficient importance to be noticed in either of the acts of suppression. In one case only is something like a confession preserved. In the surrender of S. Andrews, Northampton, the inmates admit that they have been guilty of 'ingurgitations

and farcyings of our carnal bodies and of others the supporters of our voluptuous and carnal appetite.' But this is the only document in existence at all resembling a confession, and it is obvious that its vague and bombastic terms might perfectly well apply only to the habit of indulging in a dinner rather more luxurious than the rule permitted.

4. *The Comperta.*—In the British Museum there are MS. lists of the inmates of 120 houses of the province of York, and twenty-four houses in the diocese of Norwich, arranged under the headings of certain sins—such as thieves, incestuous, adulterers, etc. In the Record Office there is a list, facsimile as regards the province of York, but giving ten other houses in the diocese of Norwich. In Bale's preface to the Pageant of the Pope quotations are made from a similar list affecting some of the largest houses in England. If these lists are trustworthy, the evidence they contain of general corruption is no doubt grave. But are they trustworthy? They seem to be copies of parts of some lost original. If so, clearly that original must have been compiled after the Act of 1536 was passed, for the houses affected by the Comperta are among the very houses in which that act asserted that religion was right well kept. They form, therefore, no part of the Black Book, but must be subsequent to it, and are not part of the evidence on which the suppression of the religious houses was undertaken. The evidence of the visitors, in fact, so far as we have any, is contrary to that of the Comperta. There are letters from the visitors dealing with the abbeys of Fountains and Rievaulx, both of which are compromised by the Comperta, but in neither case do the visitors bring any more serious charge against the houses than that of the carelessness and stupidity of the abbots. When looked at more closely the unsatisfactory character of these lists appears in stronger light. They are uniform in character, all of one stereotyped pattern, in each case the same sins, similar lists of names. There is nothing which is personal, which attempts to distinguish between one sinner and another. Clearly, if genuine they do not represent confessions of sins made at the time, but an official record drawn up afterwards. Finally, it is certain that many of those mentioned as culprits in the Comperta received promotion afterwards. This seems hard to reconcile with their trustworthiness.

At present the evidence goes no further. It is inconclusive on both sides, and depends mainly upon the amount of credence we give to the Comperta. Thus far, perhaps, we may venture. The old belief that the general corruption of the monasteries was established to the satisfaction of Parliament, and admitted by the

monks themselves in their confessions, can no longer be held ; while those who have fully grasped the methods of government pursued by Henry VIII. and Cromwell will be disposed to think it quite as likely that the Comperta were compiled to justify the suppression, as that the suppression was carried out on the evidence of the Comperta.

CHAPTER XIII

THE GROWTH OF PROTESTANT INFLUENCES IN THE CHURCH

A.D. 1526–1549

ALMOST as soon as the Reformation movement had developed itself in Germany and Switzerland, books containing its doctrines began to percolate into England. At first, as was natural, they came mainly from Germany. Luther's address to the German nobles, which was the first in which he definitely broke away from the Church and promulgated his doctrine of the ministry, reached England early in 1521. On the 1st of August, just before the king's work against Luther appeared, all the copies of Luther's writings that could be collected were solemnly burned before cardinal Wolsey at S. Paul's. This innocuous *auto da fé* seems to have answered its purpose, for we hear no more of a large general circulation of Lutheran books, though there were undoubtedly at both universities, and especially at Wolsey's new foundation of Cardinal's College at Oxford, a good many of the younger students who were attracted to the side of Luther, partly on theological and partly on moral grounds.

Introduction of Lutheranism into England.

In the year 1526 came a new and much more important influence. William Tyndale, a friar and student of Greek, who had embraced Lutheran principles, determined on translating the New Testament into English. For this purpose he settled at Worms in the upper Rhineland, and there came under the influence of Zwingli and the Swiss reformers, whose convert he became. Not content

Introduction of Zwinglian teaching.

with giving a Zwinglian bias to his translation, he prefixed to the parts as they issued from the press prefaces strongly attacking the Church and its system, and advocating the views of Zwingli.[1] The book, passing down the Rhine into Holland, easily made its way into England, smuggled in bales of Dutch ware and Flanders cloth, and quickly spread the Swiss doctrines wherever it went. It fell on ground not unprepared to receive it. The old Lollard hatred of priests and priestcraft was not dead. Dissatisfaction with the existing state of things in the Church was everywhere strong. Among learned men at the universities there was a general feeling that much of the accustomed doctrine would have to be restated in view of the greater knowledge of the Scriptures and the early fathers due to the Renaissance. To the eager and impetuous regenerator of society like Hugh Latimer, the whole movement seemed a great opportunity for the sweeping away of abuse and the purifying of religion, while the crafty and selfish marked the growing misunderstanding between Henry and the pope, and prepared themselves to swim with the flowing tide. Thus, from one cause or another, by 1529, while there were a few learned men who were attracted by some parts of the theology and moral teaching of Luther, there was a much larger and constantly increasing number of all classes who were being powerfully affected by the doctrines of Zwingli through the teaching of Tyndale and his associates, and many more who were quite prepared to follow in the same path if the king so willed.

But the king did not so will. From first to last Henry VIII. remained firmly and conscientiously attached to the religious beliefs in which he had been brought up. He never varied in the dislike of Lutheranism, which he had so vigorously expressed in his book. Still more was he opposed to the anti-sacramental doctrines of Zwingli. Well read

Policy of the king.

[1] For instance, he used the word 'congregation' instead of 'Church' and 'senior' instead of 'priest,' and pushed the doctrine of the corruption of man's nature to the length of saying, Whereas we were damned before we were born we cannot love God (by nature).

himself in theology, and naturally devout in mind, he had no sympathy at all with teaching which struck at the very foundations of Catholic theology and eviscerated the sacraments of mystery and power. While he was in the thick of his contest with the papacy abroad and with the monks at home, it is true that Henry was inclined to be doubtful of the trust to be reposed in men of the old learning, and chose among his bishops those who, like Latimer and Goodrich, sympathised with much of the Protestant[1] movement, and even appointed some who, like Barlow, rejected the Catholic doctrine of the ministry altogether. For analogous reasons, to secure himself against possible aggression on the part of Charles v., he was not unwilling to enter into negotiations for a political alliance with the Lutheran princes of north Germany, which some of those about his court would gladly have made into a religious alliance as well. But it was precisely on the religious question that the negotiations invariably broke down, and the whole scheme was readily abandoned directly the reasons for a political alliance passed away. As his throne became more and more secure after 1538 both from foreign attack and from internal disaffection, the policy of the king became more distinctly and strongly opposed to Protestant beliefs and Protestant sympathies. The law of the Six Articles, passed in 1539, actually imposed the mediæval definition of the mode of Christ's presence in the Eucharist, known as Transubstantiation, as the test of orthodoxy; while among the eleven bishops appointed between the year 1539 and the end of the reign, appear the names of Bonner, Heath, Thirlby, and Day, all of whom were afterwards prominent in resisting Protestant influences.

Throughout his reign, therefore, Henry meted out the same treatment to all declared Protestants, whether Lutherans,

[1] As the words Protestant and Catholic are sometimes used in different senses, it may be convenient to point out that in this volume the word Protestant is always used to denote religious opinions and principles in sympathy with those of the reformation movement of the sixteenth century on the continent, either in its Lutheran, Zwinglian, or Calvinistic forms; and the word Catholic to denote religious opinions and principles in sympathy with those which had become dominant in the Church in previous centuries.

Zwinglians, Calvinists, or Anabaptists.[1] They were punished, and as far as possible suppressed, as heretics, just as the Lollards had been in the days of Henry v. And when the king found the laws against heretics, which his predecessors had bequeathed to him, inadequate, as he thought, to deal with the abnormal growth of heresy which marked his reign, he did not hesitate to make Parliament give him wider powers still. As the question of the Eucharist became by force of circumstances more and more the test which most conveniently distinguished between orthodoxy and heresy, the weight of Henry's lash fell more and more upon those who adhered to the tenets of Zwingli. But from first to last he never tolerated openly any form of Protestantism whatever. In the time of Wolsey, a society called the Christian Brotherhood, which disseminated literature against the worship of saints and the adoration of relics and pilgrimages, was broken up by authority, and one of its leaders, Bilney, who had recanted and abjured his recantation, was burned as a lapsed heretic in 1531, though he was perfectly orthodox on the sacraments. During Sir Thomas More's chancellorship, which lasted from October 1529 to October 1532, a number of those who were engaged in circulating Protestant writings, both Lutheran and Zwinglian, were condemned and made to recant. In July 1533, Frith and Hewitt, who had written and maintained Zwinglian opinions on the Eucharist, were tried by a commission, of which Cranmer was the president, and condemned to be burned. In 1535 fourteen Anabaptists were condemned at S. Paul's, and burned in different places in England, so that the whole country might know the king's hatred of their opinions. In 1538 the king himself presided at the trial of Lambert, for holding Zwinglian views on the Eucharist, confuted him to his own satisfaction and ordered him to be burned. In 1540, Barnes, Jerome, and

Prosecution of Protestants as heretics.

[1] The Anabaptists were religious enthusiasts who exaggerated the Lutheran doctrine of Justification by faith only into a denial of the efficacy of the sacramental system and of all religious organisation. These views they combined with communistic ideas about property, which led to their persecution by all governments, Protestant as well as Catholic.

Gerard were condemned by act of Parliament and burned for holding the Lutheran doctrine of Justification by faith only. In 1541 three men were burned at Salisbury and two at Lincoln, under the act of the Six Articles, for depraving the Eucharist. In 1543 three others were burned at Windsor under the same act, for jesting against the Eucharist; and in 1546 Anne Askew and three others were burned for denying Transubstantiation. Certainly, thirty persons, at least, were tried and burned as heretics for holding Protestant opinions in the reign of Henry VIII., without taking account of the far larger number who saved themselves from the stake by recantation, or those who, like Barnes and his colleagues, were put to death for their opinions, without trial, by act of Parliament. Nor can it be said in respect of these cases that Henry was, like Henry V. before him, merely using heresy as the most handy weapon with which to crush political sedition. No one can pretend that Frith or Lambert or Anne Askew were in any way dangerous to the government. They did not even, like Fisher, dispute the royal headship over the Church, or like Cartwright in later times, attack the existing ecclesiastical system. Religious enthusiasts, no doubt, they were. Opponents of Henry's government they certainly were not. They met their death at the hands of the king simply because they held and taught religious opinions on the nature of the Eucharist which they believed to be true, but Henry and the Church of England believed to be false.

Formation of religious parties in England.

But although Henry had no sympathy whatever with Protestantism, either in its German or Swiss form, and endeavoured to drive it out of England by severe punishment, he was by no means blind to the existence of defects in the existing Church system, and was quite willing to remedy them, provided that the power of the crown was not thereby impaired. He himself belonged to the new rather than to the old learning. He fully appreciated the value and importance of the textual criticism of the Bible. In earlier years he had associated himself with Erasmus and More and Colet and Warham, and was looked upon as the

patron of the reforming party. Had his quarrel with the pope occurred before the outbreak of the Reformation on the continent, there can be little doubt that he would have at once used his independence in effecting considerable reforms in the English Church. But the shape which the Reformation took abroad made such a policy ten times more difficult and dangerous. The revolt of Luther and Zwingli, and half Europe after them, against the faith and organisation, as well as against the abuses of the Church, frightened the timid, encouraged the reckless, and made the prudent pause. Yet the very success of the revolution in sweeping away abuses, which many in England wished to see swept away, made it almost impossible for Church and king to stand still and do nothing when they were free to act. If the heretical character of the Protestant tracts which began to flow so fast into the country showed the danger of action, their number and the eagerness with which they were bought proved clearly the peril of delay. No sooner was the breach with Rome complete, than we are conscious of many different streams of influence which were being brought to bear upon the government, pushing it in the direction of change. There was the small and insignificant party which had definitely embraced the Lutheran or Zwinglian system, and accordingly fell under the penalties of the heresy laws. There was the much larger and more influential body of men, among whom Cranmer and Latimer were leaders, who were attracted by parts of the teaching of Luther, and deeply stirred by his moral force, and were anxious to utilise both for the purification of the Church of England. At court there were some, who, like Cromwell, had identified themselves with the policy of the quarrel with Rome, and thought that the best way to render it permanent was to organise a league of Protestants under the leadership of Henry, by making considerable religious concessions in return for political safety and predominance. There were many more among the nobility and government officials, who, like Seymour and Paget and Russell and Rich, were gorged with the spoils of the monasteries, and anxiously promoted such a policy in religion as would best

enable them to retain and increase their stores. Convocation, weakened and terrified, exercised an honest if not a commanding influence in the direction of practical reform, while above the turmoil of the jarring interests stood ever the sombre figure of the merciless king, jealous of his faith, more jealous still of his power, before whose iron will and threatening frown all England trembled and stood still.

So from many sides came a willingness, if not a demand, for change which Henry was willing to gratify so long as neither the Catholic faith nor the authority of the crown were impaired. In 1534 the king promised Convocation that he would have an authorised translation of the Bible made. In 1535 the first alteration of the services used in the Church was effected by the erasure of the name of the pope from all the service books. In 1536 the translation of the Bible, made by Miles Coverdale, was permitted by the king to be circulated in England, although it was not directly authorised. In the July of the same year, the book of the Ten Articles was drawn up by Convocation and promulgated by the king in his own name. It was divided into two parts. The first contained five Articles on Things necessary to Salvation—*i.e.* creeds, baptism, penance, the Eucharist, and justification. The necessity of baptism and penance were enjoined, and the reality of the Presence of Christ in the Consecrated Elements affirmed without touching the question of the mode. Justification was defined in words of Melanchthon, to which no exception could be taken. The rule of faith was stated to be comprised in Holy Scripture and the creeds, and the test of heresy to be the decisions of the first four œcumenical councils. The second part treated of Ceremonies, and comprised articles on images, worship of saints, prayers to saints, rites and purgatory. The teaching with regard to all was that they were to be justified and maintained, but carefully purged from abuses, such as the tendency to confuse the worship due to God with the veneration due to saints, and the belief that

Beginning of authorised changes in religion.

1. Coverdale's Bible, 1536.

2. The Ten Articles, 1536.

ceremonies had in themselves any power to remit sins, while the doctrine of purgatory was specially to be freed from the abuses of pardons and indulgences. Most of the abuses here remarked on and corrected were subsequently reformed by the Roman Church itself at the council of Trent.

But it was soon found that a more elaborate exposition of the faith and practice of the Church was required than was provided by the Ten Articles, so in the following year the king appointed a committee of the bishops and other divines to draw up a book of religious instruction in faith and morals. The work was hurriedly done, and having received the sanction of the king, was published by his authority in May 1537 under the title of *The Institution of a Christian Man.* The *Institution*, generally known as the *Bishops' Book*, contained an exposition of the creed, the sacraments, the ten commandments, the Lord's prayer, the Ave Maria, justification and purgatory. It incorporated the Ten Articles and followed a similar line of teaching to that contained in them, but was careful to insist somewhat more strongly than they had done upon the full number and doctrine of the sacraments. It was, however, through the haste of its composition, faultily expressed in parts; and Henry himself at once began to make a most careful criticism upon it by annotating his copy with his own hand, a proceeding which bore fruit a few years later.

3. The Bishops' Book, 1537.

In 1538 further steps were taken. The Great Bible, which was a revised edition of the translations of Tyndale and Coverdale, was authorised by the king, and remained the only version of the Scriptures having any authority at all until the present authorised version was made in the reign of James I., though the authority which it had received was that of the king alone and not of the Church.[1] At the same time a practical illustration of the difference between the lawful and the superstitious worship of saints and use of ceremonies was given by an order to destroy the shrine of

4. Royal authorisation of the Great Bible, 1538.

[1] That the Convocations never issued any authorised translation of the Bible in the reign of Henry VIII. was due to the king, who continued to put obstacles in their way.

S. Thomas at Canterbury, and to erase his name from all service books. This policy was carried further by the injunctions of the same year, which ordered the destruction of all images which were superstitiously used, and restricted the use of lights in the Church apart from the services to those on the rood loft, before the reserved Sacrament, and at the Holy Week sepulchre.

5. Abolition of superstitious images and lights, 1538.

In April 1540, a royal commission was issued to certain bishops and divines to draw up an exposition of the Christian Faith which should supersede the *Bishops' Book*, and an explanation of pious ceremonies. Three years were spent upon the business, which was very carefully and elaborately done, and at the beginning of 1543 two books, one on doctrine called *The Necessary Erudition of any Christian Man*, and one on ceremonies, called *A Rationale of Rites and Ceremonies*, were finished. No notice seems ever to have been taken of the latter; but the *Necessary Erudition*, usually called the *King's Book* because it was largely founded on his criticisms on the *Bishops' Book*, was approved of by Convocation and promulgated by the king in May 1543. It comes before us as by far the most carefully considered of the formularies of Henry's reign, and was backed by the authority of the Church as well as of the king. It began with a preface written in the king's name, after which followed articles on faith, the creeds, the sacraments, the ten commandments, the Lord's prayer, the Ave Maria, free will, justification, good works, and prayers for the dead. Its doctrinal standpoint is much the same as that of the *Bishops' Book*, but its language is more precise, definite, and theological. It is therefore more traditional in spirit and in effect than the *Bishops' Book*, and in some few points, especially in its assertion of Transubstantiation, more decidedly unsympathetic with Protestantism. In the same year, the way was prepared for a recasting of the service books then used by the appointment of a royal commission with instructions to strike out of them all feigned legends and superstitious matter, and bring them to the test of Scripture

6. The King's Book, 1543.

7. Authorisation of the English litany. 1544.

and the fathers. This commission, however, never reported; but in the following year an important step was taken in the direction of liturgical reform by the publication of the litany in English which had been drawn up at the king's request by Cranmer. Apparently it was never submitted to Convocation at all, but its use was enforced simply by royal authority.

Finally, in 1545, the policy which had led to the preparation of the *Bishops' Book* and the *King's Book* was carried still further by the publication of the authorised *Primer* of king Henry VIII., which differed from the mediæval primers chiefly in omitting the Hours of the Virgin and the seven deadly sins, and in adding a preface called the King's Injunction, some devotions on the Passion, and a number of occasional prayers. As the *King's Book* was to guide the faith, so the authorised *Primer* was to direct the devotions, of Englishmen.

8. Issue of the authorised Primer, 1545.

Thus far Henry VIII. proceeded in the delicate and dangerous task of making changes in the worship and ceremonial to which the country was accustomed, and in the purification of religious belief and practice. Each step which he took was marked with the utmost care and circumspection, except the publication of the *Bishops' Book*, which was in consequence soon afterwards superseded. In his repudiation of the authority of the pope, Henry well knew that he had the consent of the large majority of the English people. There were few indeed in England who believed that the prerogative of the pope was a necessary part of the Catholic faith. There were many who knew him mainly as a principal cause of abuse and injustice. In destroying the monasteries Henry saw that he could appeal to strong motives of jealousy among the secular clergy, and stronger motives of cupidity among the noble and official classes, which, combined with his own authority, and strengthened by the wave of moral sentiment aroused by his statements to the Parliament, would be sufficient to carry his policy through in triumph. Yet the Pilgrimage of Grace had shown him how dangerous it was to interfere with the popular religion and the religious institutions

The great caution of Henry in making changes in religion.

of the country. He himself felt as keenly as any one how much more difficult it was to stop than to begin in such a policy, but realised just as strongly the impossibility of not daring to begin. Hence every step was carefully guarded by the royal authority and carefully explained by the royal wisdom, and was in its nature tentative and unofficial.

Nevertheless, tentative as Henry's policy was, it is not difficult to trace three principles steadily observed throughout. The first was common to all branches of the king's government, namely, the determination to keep the direction of affairs even of religious belief and practice just as much as of political belief and practice, in absolute obedience to his own will. He dictated to his subjects the oaths of allegiance to his government and acceptance of his policy which they were to take, and would not suffer them to vary them even in thought or word. In the same way he dictated to them by authorised book, by injunction, and even by act of Parliament, the beliefs which they were to hold, and the practice which they were to observe. Never did king more strongly believe it to be part of the duty of a king to teach his subjects true religion and to punish the disobedient than did Henry VIII. Secondly, Henry distinctly wished that the services of the Church should be in the English language. He encouraged the circulation of the Scriptures in English, ordered the reading of a lesson in English every Sunday and holy day, took care that adults knew the creed, the Lord's prayer, and the ten commandments in English, and that children were taught them, and authorised the English litany. This, which is perhaps the greatest blessing which the Church has inherited from the Reformation, undoubtedly formed part of the policy of Henry VIII. Thirdly, he had attempted to lay down a clear principle of reform in matters both of faith and of observance. The authority of the undivided Church was to be the test of faith, the abuse and not the use of an observance was to be the test of reform. Doctrinal

Principles of Henry's policy.

1. The initiative and control of the crown.

2. Use of the English language.

3. Abolition of proved abuses only.

exaggerations such as those of indulgences and pardons in their mediæval form, observances such as the undue reverence given to saints like that paid to the shrine of S. Thomas, the use of images not as aids to devotion but as in themselves efficacious in procuring an answer to prayer, were to be done away, and superstitiously used images abolished, but only in order that the Catholic doctrines which lay behind the exaggerations might come more clearly into light. It was a principle difficult of application and certain to be applied in different ways by different minds, but, nevertheless, it was a true principle however it was applied. It was of no light service to the Church of England that at the beginning of her constitutional, doctrinal, and ceremonial reform the principles were so clearly laid down of the appeal to history and antiquity as the test of status and doctrine, and to proof of abuse as the limitation of ceremonial reform.

On the death of Henry VIII. in 1547, the power which he had exercised with such masterfulness and dexterity passed into the hands of the privy council during the minority of the boy king. Those who had been for so many years tools and agents suddenly found themselves masters. The change was an unfortunate one for themselves and for England, and especially unfortunate for the English Church. Never did the chief rule in England fall into hands of men of meaner mould than it did in the days of Edward VI. There was hardly one among the council whose selfishness and greed was relieved even by nobler vices. At their head was the duke of Somerset, the uncle of the king, who had made himself Lord Protector in defiance of the will of the late king. His government in ecclesiastical matters was marked by shameless greed. He appropriated the dissolved abbey of Reading, seized on Westminster abbey itself, and was only prevented from destroying it and utilising the materials for building himself a palace by the bribe of twenty manors given him by the dean and chapter. Bought off from the abbey, he turned upon S. Margaret's, which nestled under its shadow close by; but the sturdy parishioners fought manfully for their church,

Radical change on the accession of Edward VI.

Character of Somerset.

stoned the workmen whom the Protector had sent to pull it down, and made him give up the project. Foiled in the west, he found easier prey in the east. A parish church in the Strand, and the houses of the bishops of Worcester, Lichfield, and Llandaff which adjoined it, were seized upon to form the site for the new palace. The ancient church of the knights Hospitallers at Clerkenwell, and a charnel-house and chapels attached belonging to the dean and chapter of S. Paul's, were destroyed to provide materials. Hardly a bishop was appointed or translated during the whole reign without having to surrender part of the endowments of the see to the government. By such means as these Somerset was enabled to get together sufficient funds to pay for a large body of foreign soldiers of fortune, on whose swords the safety of his rule really depended.

Associated with him were the infamous Rich; Audley, another of the worst instruments of the legal tyranny of the last reign; Paget, who was suspected of having forged the schedule of the late king's will; Warwick who, under his better known name of Northumberland, was so soon to ride roughshod over the law and constitution of England; Russell and Wentworth, who were conspicuous above all others for their power of absorbing monastic and chantry lands. Men of character and weight were conspicuous by their absence. Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, was left out by the late king himself—men whispered by a trick of Paget's, who was Henry's secretary in his later days. Tunstall, bishop of Durham, and Wriothesley, the chancellor, were purposely excluded when the council was reconstituted under Somerset. One honest man alone was there in this motley crew of self-seekers who had seized upon the supreme power over England. Among them moved the amiable figure of the archbishop of Canterbury. Thomas Cranmer was one of those men against whom history would not have had one word to say had he never been taken from the seclusion of university life. As the head of a college at Cambridge he would have lived with the respect and died to the regret of all who knew him. Clever,

The other members of the council.

Thomas Cranmer.

learned, pious, and broad-minded, he was eminently fitted to shine in an academical society, and his name would have been handed down to a grateful posterity of students as a commentator on the Scriptures of no little breadth and acumen, and an adapter and translator of ancient devotional language of quite extraordinary merit. Unfortunately, an evil fortune plucked him from a life of study and retirement, and suddenly raised him to a position in which the greatest of men could hardly have succeeded, and an ordinary man was certain to fail. Face to face with the character and will of Henry VIII., Cranmer lost both initiative and judgment. Deference to authority degenerated in him into the obedience of a slave. In 1536 he set aside the marriage between Henry and Anne Boleyn on grounds which he knew to exist when he declared the marriage good in 1533. He submitted meekly to the intrusion of Cromwell and his deputy into the presidential chair of his own Convocation, and even acquiesced in the supersession of his own authority as metropolitan by the visitors of the vicegerent in 1536. He procured from the Convocations, in 1540, a declaration that the marriage between Henry and Anne of Cleves was null and void on purely hypothetical grounds. In his abject subservience he ascribed to the king direct spiritual prerogatives which Henry was the last man to accept, and claimed for bishops simply appointed by the crown the same powers as those consecrated by the Church. Even when the old lion was dead, and there were none sitting at the council table who had not risen with him to that station owing to the same course of events, though most of them by far more questionable means, weakness of will and infirmity of purpose still clung to him. Not a protest escaped his lips when Somerset and his minions were plundering the Church wholesale. No one was of less account in the council than the first subject of the realm. To be the humble servant of Henry VIII. was at least intelligible, if not pardonable, but to be as wax in the hands of Somerset and Northumberland argues a poverty of character which defies excuse. Never, perhaps, did the prestige of the chair of Augustine fall so low

as when Cranmer, against his own better judgment, set his name, at the bedside of the dying king, to the document which was to hand over the crown and nation to the family of Northumberland.

In religious matters the same defect was visible. Cranmer was one of those men who are always under the dominant influence of some mind clearer than their own, and some will which is stronger than their own. In politics he found his masters, as we have seen, in those who were in authority—Henry VIII., Cromwell, Somerset, and Northumberland. In religion he came under the successive influence of Melanchthon, the most moderate of Lutherans, and Ridley, who was theologically among the more moderate of Calvinists. There was no power of initiative about Cranmer. As an advocate he had attracted Henry's notice in the matter of his first divorce. Because he was an advocate, pledged to his cause, he was raised to the primacy, and an advocate he remained to the end of his life. It was his business to put other people's thoughts into the best possible shape, not to think out thoughts for himself. Originality of mind was as foreign to his nature as independence of action. Yet he was an honest advocate. He came by his opinions honestly, and expressed them honestly. His career is unspoilt by self-seeking or political ambition. Never till he was face to face with death did he do anything which was clean contrary to his religious principles, and for that lapse of weak human nature he manfully atoned. As long as Henry VIII. lived his deference to the king saved him from going much further in the direction of Lutheranism than the advocacy and practice of clerical marriage, and a leaning towards the doctrine of justification by faith only. By 1539 he seems, however, quite to have given up the doctrine of Transubstantiation which he undoubtedly held in 1533; and he did his best to prevent Parliament from insisting upon it and clerical celibacy in the law of the Six Articles, though he must have known quite well that the act was virtually of the king's drafting, and expressed his mind. Here again his honesty of opinion contrasts favourably with his pusillanimity of action, for

His religious opinions.

directly the statute was passed he sent his wife back again to Germany, whence he had fetched her, and took a leading part in drawing up the *King's Book*, in which Transubstantiation was taught. Soon after this, however, he fell under the spell of the powerful mind and impetuous nature of Nicholas Ridley, whom he made his chaplain. Ridley had learned his theology from Peter Martyr, the theologian of Basel, who represented the modified form of Calvinism which was at that time dominant in the upper Rhineland. To Cranmer it appeared as the solution of all his difficulties, the very quintessence of truth; and on December 14th, 1548, he expounded the Calvinistic doctrine of the Eucharist in Parliament to the great delight and satisfaction of his Swiss friends, who, characteristically enough, were overjoyed at the blow thus dealt, not to popery, but to Lutheranism. *Actum est de Lutheranismo, nostri toti facti sunt*, wrote Traherne in high glee to Bullinger at Zürich. From that time Cranmer must be reckoned a Calvinist on the doctrine of the Eucharist, and a Lutheran on the doctrine of the ministry, but in other respects he remained substantially in agreement with the theology of the Church.

In taking up this position the archbishop was but following the lead of the Protector. In spite of his want of moral scruple Somerset was not an irreligious man. In days of constant religious controversy, like those of the sixteenth century, it was not possible, even for the most indifferent of men, to refuse to take a side in the religious questions at issue. Somerset had definitely taken his side. He attached himself to the Calvinistic party, and although his religion was not deep enough to permit him to endanger his safety or abstain from filling his purse for its sake, it was sincere enough to make him wish to overthrow the religious policy of Henry VIII. and to assimilate the Church of England to Calvinistic models, at least in its sacramental teaching. But the Calvinism of Somerset and the council was confined to doctrine, and did not extend to questions of Church government. It was the Calvinism of the Rhineland which came into England in the reign of Edward VI., that of Geneva was not introduced until the

The religious position of Somerset.

time of Elizabeth. In fact, on the question of Church government they embraced the view which, though derived from the teaching of Luther, has received its historical name from an obscure Swiss theologian. Erastus maintained, in direct opposition to Calvin, the absolute supremacy of the civil government over all religious matters. The Church, according to him, was not an independent society with its own irreversible principles and its own inalienable rights, but was merely the State department of religion and morality. Church and State were not two co-ordinate powers, each supreme in its own sphere, but the Church was merely a convenient form of describing the religious department of the government, and was as much subject to, and the creature of, the government as were the departments of finance or diplomacy.

Their Erastianism.

Such was the principle uniformly acted on by the council throughout the reign of Edward VI. They took the initiative in all the changes made, both liturgical and ceremonial. They added to the Prayer-book an important doctrinal statement on their own authority alone. They told bishops what doctrine they were to preach, and deprived them if disobedient by their own authority alone. By the same authority they ordered the destruction of images and altars and stained glass, superseded the *King's Book* as the authorised exposition of doctrine, although it had received the sanction of both king and Convocation. They reduced the bishops from being the ordinaries and rulers of the Church into being merely their officers for carrying out their orders in the department of religion. It is true that the appointment of Cromwell as the vicegerent of Henry VIII., and some of his acts in that capacity, formed, to a certain extent, precedents for some of these measures. But no one could be blind to the difference between the delegacy of the prerogative of the Christian Prince during part of his reign to a minister for a special purpose, and its permanent absorption by the privy council during the whole of the king's minority. The one was a high-handed disregard of a constitutional convention, the other the direct seizure of unconstitutional power. The question came to the front directly

after the young king was crowned, and formed the dividing line between those who adhered to the religious policy of Henry VIII. and those who wished to overthrow it. Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, on behalf of the followers of Henry, maintained the constitutional doctrine that the supremacy was in its nature a personal prerogative and could not, therefore, devolve upon the council *ex officio*, and claimed that no further alterations should be made in religious matters until the king came of age. But the council set aside the protest, and at once entered upon their policy of a further reform of the English Church in the direction of Calvinism, carried out on the initiative and by the power of the civil government.

In July 1547 the council began their campaign by the publication of a book of Homilies, drawn up by Cranmer, which was much more Protestant in tone than the *King's Book*, and was intended to supersede it as an exposition of faith on those subjects with which it dealt. In the next month they ordered a general visitation, by their own authority only, of all the dioceses of England, and suspended the powers of all bishops and ordinaries while it lasted. The chief object of the visitation was to enforce the injunctions with which the visitors were provided. The most important were those which ordered the destruction of all pictures of feigned miracles on walls or in windows, the taking away of all lights except the two lights before the Sacrament, the providing of a copy of the Great Bible and of the Paraphrase of Erasmus in every parish church, and the reading of the epistle and gospel at high mass in English. It was in virtue of the first of these injunctions that the crusade of fanaticism against Christian art began, which continued during the whole of the reign of Edward VI., and did not rest until it had reduced the magnificent parish churches of England—the chosen home of an art which, in its richness, its grace, and its modesty was unsurpassed even in Italy itself—to the level of Calvinistic meeting-houses, and filled them with the cold glare of clear glass and whitewash. Nothing probably has done so

First book of Homilies, 1547.

Injunctions of 1547.

much to destroy the sense of colour once so exquisite in England as this wanton destruction of the painted windows and frescoed walls of our churches. The stubborn bishop of Winchester was not likely to accept these proceedings tamely. He maintained that both the visitation and the injunctions were illegal. The council did not argue the point, or have it tried by a court of law, but simply committed him to prison without trial or charge. Bonner, bishop of London, met with similar punishment for issuing a protest against the visitation.

Having thus silenced the opposition leaders the council was ready to meet Parliament, which assembled on November 4th.

Session of 1547-8.

The first act passed with reference to religious matters was one rendered necessary by the increasing number of outrages which were being committed in churches by fanatics. It imposed penalties on those who spoke irreverently of the Sacrament of the Altar, and went on in a subsequent clause to order that Communion should in future be given in both kinds, to which apparently Convocation had already agreed. Another act abolished the *Congé d'elire*, and provided that ecclesiastical procedure should henceforth be in the king's name, while a third secured to his use those of the chantries and free chapels which had escaped the hands of his father. To the credit of both council and Parliament, the first session of the new reign also saw the repeal of the tyrannical treason statutes of Henry VIII., and of the law of the Six Articles, as well as the Lollard heresy laws.

When the session was over the council resumed their task of altering the religious observances of the country. In January

Attack upon ceremonies and images, 1548.

1548 appeared a royal proclamation authorising the omission of the use of candles on Candlemas Day, ashes on Ash Wednesday, and palms on Palm Sunday. In the next week appeared an order of council adding the use of holy bread and holy water, and the beautiful service of the veneration of the Cross on Good Friday, commonly known as 'creeping to the Cross,' to the list of ceremonies which were no longer to be enforced. Later in the same

month came a further order of council to take away all images out of parish churches, whether they had been abused or not. It was probably in virtue of this order that the terrible destruction of carved stone-work in reredos and screen and pillar, which is conspicuous in so many of our cathedrals and parish churches, took place. By March all was ready for a better and more important change. Among the more religious of the clergy was a strong desire to revive among the laity the primitive habit of more frequent Communion, and with that object a body of six bishops and six other clergy, together with the archbishop, had been entrusted by the council with the duty of drawing up an order in English for the giving of Communion in both kinds as authorised by the act just passed. The committee consisted of men of very varying shades of religious sympathies, but though there was a majority among them of those who desired to see changes effected in the services of the Church, there was also a majority no less decided in favour of the doctrine and worship of the Church as against that of Luther or Calvin. This fact became of great importance a few months afterwards, when the same committee was entrusted with the more delicate business of drawing up the Prayer-book and ordinal.

Committee appointed to draw up an order for Communion.

The order of Communion was finished at the beginning of March, and its use enforced by royal proclamation. It consisted of the exhortation, confession, absolution, the comfortable words, and the prayer of humble access which form part of the Communion office in the present Prayer-book, with very slight alterations, and an exhortation to come to Communion, to be read on some day previous to the celebration, which is substantially the same as the first exhortation of the present book. It was specially ordered that the use of the form should not alter the accustomed Latin mass, but should be interpolated in it after the priests' Communion. The source from which the committee derived their order is an interesting one. With considerable and significant alterations it is taken from the form

The order of Communion, 1548.

which Bucer and Melanchthon drew up, at the request of Hermann, archbishop of Köln, in order to recommend the Reformation to the Catholic population of that city, and was itself based on the Mass-book which Luther had drawn up for Nürnberg in 1533. The Consultation of Hermann, as it was called, represented therefore the form of Lutheranism which most nearly approached to Catholic doctrine and worship, and in its adaptation for the use of the English Church it was carefully purged of all distinctively Lutheran expressions.[1]

For a few months the council were more occupied in defending themselves against attack than in prosecuting their campaign any further. They seem to have become dimly aware that the destruction and spoliation which was everywhere going on under their direction or by their connivance was not endearing them to the bulk of the population. So they determined to silence opposition. In April a proclamation was issued prohibiting all preaching except that licensed by the king, the protector, or the primate. In June a final blow was struck at the bishop of Winchester. At the end of the session of 1547, both Gardiner and Bonner had been released from prison, and allowed to return to their dioceses. But the council could not feel themselves safe as long as they were at liberty. So at Whitsuntide they summoned Gardiner to London and ordered him to preach before the king on certain specified subjects, of which the authority of the council during the minority of the king was one. Two days before the sermon was to have been delivered came an order from the Protector forbidding him to preach upon the doctrine of the Eucharist. But Gardiner had already written his sermon, and dealt with this very subject in it. He refused to rewrite it simply at the order of the Protector. Accordingly, on June 29th, he preached before the king in justification of the policy of Henry VIII., and in defence of the doctrine of the Real Presence, and

Imprisonment of Gardiner, 1548.

[1] This can easily be seen by comparing the statements about the corruption of man's nature in the general confession in the Consultation with the form of confession in the Prayer-book.

carefully avoided all reference to the council or their authority. He was at once committed to prison for the rest of the reign.

When Parliament met at the end of November it found most important work before it. The committee of January 1548, when it had finished the work of drawing up the English order of Communion, went on to undertake the far more arduous task of the revision of the Latin service-books, and the preparation from them and other available sources of a book of Common Prayer and the administration of the Sacraments in English. They had completed their labours by Christmas, and early in January 1549 Parliament was asked to make the new book the only legal service-book in England by a penal statute. By the end of the month the first act of Uniformity was enrolled on the statute-book. After recounting the appointment of the committee and the instructions to them to draw up a uniform order having respect to Scripture and the usages of the primitive Church, the statute provided that every minister after Whitsunday 1549 was to use the new Prayer-book and none other, under the penalty of fine, deprivation, and eventually imprisonment. Offences against the act were made cognisable either at assizes by common law, or in the courts ecclesiastical, but not in both. The act opens a new chapter in English Church history, which corresponds with a new wave of thought which was passing over the whole of the western Church. In happier times the Church, content with its unity, welcomed rather than discouraged variety of service and ritual. East differed widely in observance from west, Italy from Gaul or Spain, Rome even from Milan. But in the sixteenth century the tide was running the other way. The Church, threatened by division, thought to strengthen its own unity and discover its enemies by imposing a rigid system of uniformity upon its own members. Rome was endeavouring to supplant all local and national usages by Roman usages. England imposed the Prayer-book without alteration upon Ireland, and placed in the forefront

The first act of Uniformity, 1549.

The sixteenth century an age of uniformity.

of the reasons for drawing up the Prayer-book at all, the desirability 'that the whole realm should have one use.' But it is worth notice that unlike subsequent acts of uniformity, the act of 1549 was not aggressive in its character but directive. It was not primarily a weapon by which dissidents were to be coerced, but enunciated a policy by which they might be prevented from arising. It did not affect the laity at all. So also its design was not to force all the clergy by penalties to conduct divine service exactly alike, but to set a governmental standard which all should use. Uniformity of book, not uniformity of ritual, was the object, but the uniform book was to have the sanction of the government and express its wishes.

The publication of the Prayer-book of 1549 was probably the most important event which had taken place in the English Church since the synod of Whitby, yet it is extremely doubtful whether the book ever received the sanction of Convocation. It is difficult to believe that so critical a change in the religious life of the country could have been passed by Convocation without debate, especially as six bishops voted against the act of Uniformity in Parliament. Yet there is no mention whatever of any such debate in any contemporary records, and it seems impossible that a debate of this sort should not have attracted notice if it ever took place. On the other hand, the council, writing to Bonner in the king's name in July 1549, distinctly assert that the book was set forth 'by the learned men of this our realm in their synods and convocations provincial.' This assertion taken by itself would not be of much weight, as the history of the forty-two articles shows that the council were not above telling a downright untruth on such a matter if it was to their advantage. But Bonner was bishop of London at the time, and as such was a prominent member of both Parliament and Convocation, and it is incredible that the council should have gone out of their way to tell a deliberate untruth to a man who could instantly refute it of his own knowledge. The explanation probably is, that the book was brought

Question if the Prayer-book was sanctioned by Convocation.

to the notice of the Convocation in some unofficial way without any debate taking place, and the council assumed consent in the absence of formal opposition. It must be remembered, however, that the opposition of the six bishops to the act of Uniformity and the common law penalties which it contained by no means necessarily involved their opposition to the Prayer-book itself. Many men might have been quite willing to accept and use the Prayer-book as a manual of church doctrine, discipline, and worship, without desiring to see it enforced by penal legislation.

General character of the Prayer-book.

The Prayer-book imposed by the act of Uniformity of 1549 was in its main essence a revision and translation from the Latin of the breviary, and missal, and pontifical, according to the use of Sarum, with additions, some of which were from other early sources, such as the liturgy of S. Chrysostom and the sacramentaries of Gelasius and Gregory, some from contemporary Lutheran sources, such as Hermann's Consultation and Luther's Nürnberg liturgy, and some which were the composition of the revisers themselves. The canonical hours of the breviary were compressed into the two forms of matins and evensong by leaving out the three day hours of terce, sext, and nones, and constructing matins from the offices of matins, lauds, and prime, and evensong from those of vespers and compline. The litany was the same as that drawn up in English by Cranmer in 1544, and ordered to be used by Henry VIII., with the exception of the omission of the direct invocation of the assistance of the prayers of saints. The introits, collects, epistles, and gospels, were mainly taken from those in the Sarum missal, but some of the collects were re-written and the Holy Week services much altered by the omission of the mass of the Presanctified on Good Friday, and the division of the readings of the Passion from the four evangelists among six days instead of four. 'The Supper of the Lord and the Holy Communion, commonly called the Mass,' was almost wholly adapted from the Sarum missal, excepting that it incorporated the order of Communion of 1548 after the Consecration;

but in adapting the Sarum liturgy[1] the revisers altered the phrases very considerably while preserving the meaning, and made several important omissions.

They omitted almost entirely the preparation of the priest both before he began mass and before he began the canon, and the oblation of the elements called the lesser oblation, and the ceremonies of the fraction and the elevation of the Host and the kissing of the pax, and they gave particular directions that the whole of the canon was to be said or sung plainly and directly, instead of being said secretly as before. Hence, although the structure and tone of the liturgy, and to some extent its words, were the same as those used in the Middle Ages, the service itself would seem very different to the congregation who were present. The baptismal office was mainly based upon the Sarum offices, but received considerable additions from the Consultation of Hermann, which had no doctrinal significance. The order of confirmation in like manner was mainly a translation of the office in the Sarum pontifical, with the omission of the chrism or the anointing of the candidate with oil, and the addition of a catechism which was based upon, though not adapted from, the Consultation of Hermann. The forms for the solemnisation of holy matrimony, for the churching of women, the visitation and anointing of the sick, and for the burial of the dead, and the commination service were also adapted from the old services, with the addition of exhortations and addresses which were composed by the revisers, and can readily be distinguished from the older forms by their sententiousness.

A comparison between the Prayer-book of 1549 and the Latin services from which it was mainly deduced soon shows the chief objects which the revisers had in their minds in carrying out their work. First among those objects came simplicity. In the explanation of the motives which had

Objects of the revisers.

[1] The word *liturgy* properly applies only to the service of the Holy Eucharist. The *canon* is the most sacred part of the liturgy, and begins after the Holy, Holy, Holy, and contains the commemoration of the living and the dead, the oblation of the elements, the invocation of the Holy Spirit, as well as the Consecration and the Communion.

influenced them, which they prefixed to the book, they themselves put this in the forefront, and the most cursory glance at their completed work fully bears out their assertion. There was abundant reason for their decision. The Latin services, being from their language unintelligible to the people, had in the course of ages acquired the character of services performed by the learned on behalf of the unlearned. They had become much too complicated for general use, by the number of special commemorations by which the days of the changing year were marked. By an inevitable necessity the complication of the services required a complication of rules and rubrics for their regulation, which the revisers pathetically allude to as the 'hardness of the rule called the Pie, which often made it more difficult to find out what was to be read than to read it when it was found out.' These difficulties of course applied far more to the recitation of the hours than to the celebration of mass, but in a greater or less degree they were common to all the services. The revisers determined to secure simplicity and intelligibility at almost any cost. Commemorations, special versicles and responds, invitatories, even antiphons and the special Holy Week services, were swept away, and, with the exception of the changing collects and the readings from Scripture, the daily services of the Church were made hardly to vary throughout the year.

1. The services to be simple.

The substitution of the English language for Latin, and the simplicity of the services as revised, naturally led to an effort to make them congregational. Matins and evensong, though they had become specially clerical services, were to be said in church, and a bell tolled in order that the parishioners might attend. Baptism was ordered to be administered on Sundays and holy days, so that it might take place in the presence of the congregation. Private and solitary masses were to be abolished, and there was to be no celebration at all unless there were some present who intended to communicate. The chief object of the numerous exhortations introduced into the various services was that the

2. Congregational.

congregation present, few of whom it must be remembered could read, might understand the nature and character of the service in which they were taking part. Further, the revisers evidently desired to bring the services of the Church more rigorously to the test of Scripture and the primitive Church. On that ground they felt they were safe. Thus in the calendar they only admitted the names of those saints who were mentioned in Scripture. They were careful to exclude from the language of the mass words which had become associated with the mediæval doctrine of Transubstantiation. In the office for the visitation of the sick the ceremony of unction was retained as scriptural and ordered to be administered if desired, but it was not enjoined as essential to the rite, as that doctrine had only become prevalent during the twelfth century. They excluded from matins and evensong all readings from the writings of the fathers, and made provision for the reading of the whole Bible during the year, and the recitation of the whole Psalter every month. Lastly, they tried to apply to the purification of the services of the Church the same principle which Henry VIII. had applied to the use of images. They made the fact and not the possibility of abuse the test of omission. Thus they left out all direct invocation of saints and all mention of purgatory, but they retained the commemoration of the departed in the canon, and the prayer for their perfection which accompanied it, as well as the mention of the ministry of the holy angels in presenting the prayers of the congregation before the tabernacle of the Divine Majesty.

3. Scriptural and primitive.

4. Purified from proved abuses.

Against these principles of revision themselves not a word could be said, but as regards their application, there is room for doubting whether the revisers did not somewhat suffer from excess of zeal. The total omission of antiphons alone deprived the Church of much beautiful and thoroughly scriptural teaching on the spiritual meaning and application of the psalms, which gave richness and variety to the service without undue complication. The

Criticism of their work.

abolition of the distinctive services for Good Friday changed the liturgical celebration of that sacred day from the most effective into the least satisfactory in the Church's year. The omission of the priest's preparation and some of the ceremonies at mass seem to be founded on no reason at all, and be simply due to haste or carelessness. It was easier to strike them out than to agree in the revision of them.[1] Much as the Church of England has gained by the regular recitation of the psalter and reading of Scripture it has also lost much in variety, in elasticity, in distinction, by the ruthless excision of the commemorations of saints. To some extent this great fault has been felt and remedied. Not a revision of the Prayer-book has taken place since 1549 without additions being made to the calendar and the offices, and in 1662 the lesser oblation and the fraction were restored in the mass, and many prayers added for various occasions. Custom too has stepped in where authority lagged behind, and Church music has been called upon to fill the place vacated by liturgical art. Congregations find in chant, and anthem, and hymn, something of the richness and variety in the services of the Church which the sternness of the revisers of 1549 took away from them in their pursuit of simplicity.

The haste with which the book was constructed, or perhaps the timidity of the revisers, led them to avoid altogether the difficult question of ceremonies. The most superficial examination of the rules and directions for the celebration of public worship in the Prayer-book of 1549 is sufficient to show that they certainly were never intended to form a complete code of instructions. If the New Zealander, made famous by Macaulay, should chance to find a copy of the present Prayer-book while he is visiting the ruins of S. Paul's before sitting down to sketch them, and should exercise his

Inadequacy of the rubrics.

[1] It is possible, however, that with regard to the preparation, the fraction, and the lesser oblation, the silence of the Prayer-book is the result of a division among the revisers, ending in the decision to prescribe only a minimum, and contemplated for the time at any rate some private discretion in supplementing what was prescribed.

curiosity by trying to discover from that book how the barbarous Englishmen worshipped God, he would be sorely puzzled to extract from the rubrics anything like a complete order of service. If the Prayer-book which he found happened to be one of 1549 instead of 1662, the attempt would be simply hopeless. It would appear to his cultivated understanding a mere chaos. The fact is that the book is unintelligible except on the theory that it pre-supposed the existence of a well-known system, and only gave such directions as were necessary to carry out and explain the changes which had been made. Whether it was deliberately intended to retain every gesture and ceremony which was not expressly abolished or modified cannot now be accurately determined. Probably the revisers desired to leave much indeterminate to be shaped by events. All that can safely be said is that of the two opposing theories which have been held on this subject, *i.e.* that no ancient ceremony is permissible which is not expressly authorised, and that every ancient ceremony is permissible which is not expressly condemned, the latter is the only one to which the rubrics of the Prayer-book of 1549 lend any assistance.

The book of 1549 the completion of the work of Henry VIII.

The Prayer-book of 1549 is really the completion of the work of Henry VIII. far more than the beginning of that of the council under Edward VI. Had Henry VIII. lived three years longer, there can be little doubt that he would have authorised the revision of the service-books and their translation into English. The friends and supporters of his ecclesiastical policy, Gardiner and Tunstall, though they would have preferred less drastic changes, were willing to use the Prayer-book as it stood. The council of Edward VI., however, and their supporters, at once began to find fault with it. Cranmer began to revise its wording, the council issued injunctions to try and alter its effect. However careful the revisers might have been not to abolish the ancient gestures and ceremonies so long associated in men's minds with the celebration of the mass, the council were determined to sweep them all away and make the difference between the two services as marked as

The council order the disuse of gestures and ceremonies.

possible. To effect this they ordered the disuse of private gestures and ceremonies commonly used by the priest in saying mass, the abolition of the use of lights and bells at mass, the washing and anointing of the altar and the use of the Holy Week sepulchre. These changes, and the abolition of the Latin services, led to a serious rising in Devonshire, which was crushed with difficulty by the German mercenaries. This, however, seems to have been the only serious protest against the Prayer-book. Everywhere else it was accepted peaceably, if not welcomed, by both clergy and laity. Even in Devonshire it is clear that the dissatisfaction was quite as strong against the rapacity of the government as against the Prayer-book, for in the statement of demands which the rebels drew up, they included the restoration of half the abbey lands and of images in the churches with that of a return to the Latin services; while the value of their protest was considerably weakened, from a religious point of view, by the demand that Communion should only be given once a year at Easter.

The years which have passed since the Prayer-book was drawn up have served to bring into greater prominence the merits rather than the defects of the revisers' work. The book as it issued from their hands was instinct with the spirit of the Catholic Church. It bore no trace of either primitive or contemporary heresy.[1] Based upon services which had behind

[1] Some modern Roman Catholic controversialists attempt to prove the Prayer-book heretical on the doctrine of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, by showing: (1) that some passages in the Sarum missal strongly asserting the doctrine were omitted in the Prayer-book; (2) that the Prayer-book corresponds in some particulars to the Lutheran service-books, and Luther denied the doctrine; (3) that Cranmer and some other members of the revising committee disbelieved the doctrine. To this it may be sufficient to reply: (1) that the passages in question were omitted because they had become associated in men's minds with the materialistic view of the Sacrifice generally held in the Middle Ages, but contrary to the primitive doctrine; (2) that the resemblance to the Lutheran services ceases at the very point where the critical part of the mass begins, *i.e.* the canon, which is entirely and significantly different; (3) that it is against all sound principles of interpretation to explain the words of a written document, drawn up by a number of people, by the known opinions and wishes of some few of their body, however eminent. It is clear, moreover, that Gardiner, and Bonner, and Tunstall did not think the book contained heresy, as they consented to use it, while Cranmer was so dissatisfied with it that he began altering it at once.

them fifteen hundred years of Christian thought, translated into deep and rich English with rare taste and delicacy, strengthened by the best products of contemporary learning, and brought into close dependence upon the authority of Holy Scripture, the book of Common Prayer has slowly but surely won its way into the hearts and minds of Englishmen. It has become their manual of private devotion as well as their book of public worship. Even over those who repudiate its public use it exercises a benignant if unacknowledged sway. The religious and moral life of England for three centuries has rested upon the Bible and the Prayer-book, and the national character would not be what it is had either of them been banished from her history.

NOTE C

THE EUCHARISTIC CONTROVERSY

THE Eucharistic controversy played such a large part in the judicial trials and in the disputations which accompanied certain phases of the English Reformation, that it may be useful to state plainly the different views which were held on the subject by the different parties.

1. *The doctrine of the Real Presence.* In the early ages of the Church it was held by all Christians, whether orthodox or heretical, that the bread and wine offered and consecrated in the liturgy or service of the Holy Eucharist were by consecration made to be truly and really the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. But as to the manner in which His Body and Blood came to be thus present in the Sacrament, nothing was defined or affirmed, except that it was in an ineffable and spiritual manner. This is the doctrine which, according to Anglican theologians, is intended to be taught by the formularies of the Church of England as reformed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

2. *Transubstantiation.* In the ninth and tenth centuries much speculation was rife as to the exact explanation of the mystery of the Presence, and the word *transubstantiated*, which, like the corresponding Greek word, had been in earlier use to express the simple

fact that the bread and wine had become changed, now became associated with current metaphysical theories as to the nature of all material things. Philosophers at that time maintained that every material thing consisted of two parts—the substance, which, though invisible and imperceptible, constituted the essential reality of the thing, and the accidents, which were visible and tangible, and gave it its outward form and shape and taste. Applying this to the Holy Eucharist some mediæval theologians held that the substance of the bread and wine was by consecration actually changed into the substance of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, so that although the accidents remained and the outward appearance was the same, the substance of bread and wine had in fact wholly ceased to be, and a new substance—that of the Body and Blood of Christ—had taken its place. This doctrine was widely held both in England and on the continent during the Middle Ages. The phrase *transubstantiated* received official sanction at the council of the Lateran held in 1215, but its meaning was left undefined ; and it was not until the council of Trent, which concluded its sittings in December 1563, that the definition of it in accordance with the metaphysical view mentioned above became the official doctrine of the Church of Rome. In England the doctrine was commonly current at the beginning of the sixteenth century, and belief in it was enforced by both Henry VIII. and queen Mary. It was not finally repudiated till the days of Elizabeth, but there had been earlier protests against it. Wicliffe, while using the phrase *transubstantiation*, attacked the metaphysical doctrine on the purely philosophical point that it implied that accidents could exist without a substance in which to inhere, and maintained, like Luther afterwards, that the substance of the bread and wine existed side by side with the substance of the Body and Blood of Christ. This theory, which was subsequently styled *Consubstantiation*, never gained any hold over English thought. The subject was further complicated by the fact that by the sixteenth century the word *substance* had lost its technical meaning, and had become equivalent in current usage to the substance combined with the accidents, so that the doctrine that the substance of the bread and wine was destroyed and a new substance substituted, seemed to many reasoners to overthrow the nature of a sacrament by destroying the reality of the outward and visible sign. To others it seemed to involve a gross and materialistic view of the Presence, which was accordingly described by them as *carnal* or *corporal*. It was to guard against dangers such as these that the Twenty-eighth Article was drawn up, and the declaration on kneeling introduced into the Prayer-book.

3. *The doctrine of Zwingli.* Zwingli the Swiss reformer of Zürich, in his desire to get rid of the necessity of a priesthood, denied that the sacraments were means by which grace was given, and asserted that they were merely edifying rites confirmatory of grace which had already been acquired. Accordingly he denied that there was any mystery at all in the Holy Eucharist, and explained our Lord's words and ritual at the time of its institution as merely figurative and metaphorical. Thus the Holy Eucharist became only a love feast commemorative of the death of Jesus Christ. These views, though strongly opposed by Luther, were held by the early Swiss and Dutch reformers, and came over to England from the Low Countries in the reign of Henry VIII. Frith, Lambert, Anne Askew, and most of the humbler Protestants who were put to death under Mary held this view of the Sacrament, believed that consecration made no difference at all, and denied not merely Transubstantiation, but any objective Presence at all of any kind. After the accession of Elizabeth the Zwinglian view tended to become absorbed in the dominant Calvinism of the time.

4. *The Receptionist doctrine.* Calvin, the great French reformer, who settled at Geneva, maintained a more subtle view. Like Zwingli he held that sacraments were primarily seals of grace already given. Like him he denied that the words of consecration had any effect as regards the bread and wine itself, which remained exactly as they were before consecration. But unlike him he asserted that the Eucharist was not a mere commemorative rite, but that Jesus Christ did communicate the benefit of His Body and Blood to the soul of the worthy receiver when the bread and wine was received with the mouth. The Presence, therefore, became only a subjective presence in the soul of the worthy receiver and not an objective presence in the Sacrament itself, and the sacramental bread and wine became merely tokens, not the channels, of a grace that was being given. This view, equally with that of Zwingli, eviscerated the liturgy from all idea of worship, and made what had been the universal service of Divine worship in the Church since the times of the Apostles into a pious exercise of personal devotion, but enriched the Zwinglian idea of Communion by associating it with the benefit of the reception in the soul of Christ's Body and Blood.

Some of the more widely read theologians of the time of Edward VI. held this doctrine, notably the foreigners, Peter Martyr and Martin Bucer, who came from Basel and Strassburg, and Ridley, bishop of London, who taught it to Cranmer; but it did not have any great influence in English religious thought till the time of Elizabeth.

Most of the men who received high office in the Church in the early days of Elizabeth had come under strong Calvinistic influence when exiles from England in the days of Mary, and on their return they taught Calvinistic doctrine to their flocks so successfully that the Receptionist view was that usually held by Englishmen from the accession of Elizabeth until the doctrine of the Real Presence was emphasised anew by Andrewes and his followers in the reign of James I. To this day it is largely held within the pale of the Church, as well as among some of the Nonconformist bodies.

CHAPTER XIV

ALTERATIONS IN RELIGION

A.D. 1549-1559

THE same session of Parliament in which the act of Uniformity was passed saw the abolition of the legal restrictions on the marriage of the clergy. No doubt the Church gained much by the recognition of the wives and families of the clergy; but with the cleansing of the moral atmosphere in one direction came the darkening of it in another through the inevitable deterioration of character produced by the pressure of grinding poverty. Throughout the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, much of the intrigue and subserviency ascribed to the clergy was primarily due to this cause. It would seem as if the change was not very well received, as in the last year of the reign a further statute was passed to confirm the validity of the marriages of the clergy, and establish the legitimacy of their children, which apparently had been called in question.

Permission of clerical marriage, 1549.

Emboldened by their success over the brave but half-armed peasants of Devonshire, the council now determined to use against Bonner the weapon which had proved so efficacious in the case of Gardiner. He was ordered to preach at Paul's cross on certain specified subjects. The sermon was at once denounced, and a royal commission issued in September to try him. The commission found him guilty of disobeying the orders of the council and stirring up the people to sedition, and deprived him of his bishopric by the authority of the king, without any ecclesiastical trial whatever. This was the

Deprivation of Bonner, 1549.

first of a long list of illegal deprivations which marked the rest of the reign. Hardly was Bonner safe in his prison than the turn of Somerset himself came. On the 11th of October he was ousted from the protectorate, and a new council of regency formed under the leadership of Warwick, who became duke of Northumberland in 1552. The change was more one of men than of policy. Northumberland was a pure self-seeker, with more ability than Somerset but even less character. In religion, if he spoke the truth when face to face with death on the scaffold, he was at heart an adherent of the pope, but his ambition leagued him with the Protestants. With his advent to power we reach a period in the history of the English Church when the religious interests of the people become entirely subordinate to the political interests of the government, and a small minority of unscrupulous politicians are engaged in changing the religious institutions of the country in order thereby to perpetuate their own authority.

Accession to power of Northumberland, 1549.

In the parliamentary session which began in November 1549, two statutes on ecclesiastical matters were added to the statute book. By the first all images, except monumental figures, which still remained in the parish churches, and all the Latin service-books, the use of which was now superseded by the Prayer-book, were ordered to be destroyed. By the second the sanction of Parliament was given to an ordinal, which was about to be drawn up by a commission of bishops and theologians appointed for that purpose by the crown. By March 1550 their labours were ended and the revised ordinal published. The ordinale and pontificale, according to the use of Sarum, formed the groundwork of the new book, and all essential parts of the old rites were most carefully retained. But in their strenuous love of simplicity, the revisers abolished nearly every ceremony which was not absolutely essential, and added a series of questions addressed in public to the candidates for ordination, in order to associate the congregation as much as possible with the service. The old

The new ordinal, 1550.

services were no doubt unduly complicated and inordinately long, but in the revised ordinal as in the Prayer-book brevity was gained by the sacrifice of much that was venerable and instructive.

Having thus made provision for the revision of the ordinal and the destruction of the old service-books, the council turned its attention to changes in the episcopate. Heath, bishop of Worcester, refused to subscribe to the new ordinal, and was accordingly imprisoned, in March 1550. The next month Ridley was rewarded for his zeal by receiving the see of London, vacated by the deprivation of Bonner. Ponet, one of the chaplains of Cranmer, and an ardent supporter of the government, succeeded Ridley at Rochester. No sooner did Ridley find himself safe in Bonner's seat than he began of his own accord, but probably with the connivance of the council, an attack upon altars. Without any legal authority at all, he issued an injunction to his clergy to take away the altars in their churches, and to substitute for them movable wooden tables, and on June 11th the altar in S. Paul's was pulled down and destroyed in the presence of the bishop. Encouraged by this, the council a week later ordered the destruction of the altar at S. George's Chapel, Windsor; and on November 24th they issued letters to all the bishops ordering them to have the altars in their dioceses taken away, and committed Day, bishop of Chichester, to prison in the following month for disobedience. It is more than probable that as a matter of law Day was right and the council were wrong, for the existing altars were protected by the Prayer-book, which had received the authority of Parliament; and even the most strenuous supporter of the crown would hardly maintain that a royal letter was superior to an act of Parliament. But people engaged in a political and religious revolution must not stick at trifles, and in February 1551 the council were ready to deal another blow at Gardiner. A deputation from the council visited him in his prison and required his opinion upon the new Prayer-book and ordinal. The bishop, probably

Changes in the episcopate, 1550.

Destruction of altars, 1550.

Trial of Gardiner, 1551.

to their surprise, professed himself willing to accept the Prayer-book and enforce its use, and only objected to the ordinal, that the omission of the unction of the priest would raise a difficulty about conferring the unction upon the king at his coronation. On this the council had recourse to a safer weapon, and demanded of him an acknowledgment of his previous guilt. This the bishop steadily and warmly refused to give, maintaining his innocence, and demanding to be tried by law. 'How can I,' he cried, 'knowing myself innocent impair my innocency by my own words. By the Passion of God, I require of you that my matter may take an end in justice.' But justice was the last thing which the council were thinking of. His deprivation was necessary for a reason which was very soon seen. In December a royal commission was issued which sat for twenty days, but like all the commissions of the time only sat to register a foregone conclusion. On the 14th of February 1552 Gardiner was deprived of his bishopric and replaced by Ponet of Rochester, who on his appointment surrendered the whole of the endowments of the see to the king, in return for an annual revenue of 2000 marks secured on some of the tithe.

His deprivation, 1552.

The destruction of the altars in 1550 was the first direct step taken by the government against the doctrine of the Real Presence of Our Lord in the Eucharist. Up to that time the fact of the Presence had hardly been in dispute among learned men in England, though, as we have seen, there was a numerous and increasing body among the uneducated, especially in the diocese of London and in the eastern counties, who denied it, having adopted the opinions of Zwingli, and perhaps pushed them beyond the length which that uncompromising leader was prepared to go. Even Cranmer in the famous speech on the subject in Parliament in 1548, which was enthusiastically claimed by the Zürich school as wholly on their side, does not seem really to have intended to differ from his master, Ridley, who always asserted to the end of his life that he believed in the

Attack upon the doctrine of the Real Presence.

Reality of the Presence, though with many subtle qualifications. There could be no doubt whatever that the authorised formularies of the Church of England not only distinctly taught it, but were not patient of any other interpretation. Since the suppression of the Devonshire rebellion, however, and the success of the measures taken against Gardiner, Bonner, and Heath, a disposition had been noticeable in the council to lay a foundation for an attack upon that central doctrine of the Church. It was felt by many that if that doctrine could be got rid of, the breach between the old and new systems would be irreparable. To cut at the very core of the spiritual life of the nation was no light matter, and great care was necessary. Teachers of the new doctrine had already been imported into England. The religious troubles of Germany had sent to our shores some of the leading reformers of southern Europe. Martin Bucer of Strassburg, who combined a belief in the Real Presence with a great desire to come to terms of communion with the Swiss, received the professorship of divinity at Cambridge in 1548. In the same year, Peter Martyr of Basel, who denied the Presence in any real and intelligible sense, became professor of divinity at Oxford, and laboured hard to convert the university to his views by lectures, books, and disputations. John Laski, an open adherent of the Zürich school, was made the superintendent of the foreign congregations of London in 1550, and brought to the knowledge of Englishmen for the first time, in the nave of the church[1] of the Austin Friars, which was given to him by the council, the full presbyterian system of Switzerland. At the same time, a regular propaganda was maintained in a similar direction by the dissemination of Tyndale's and Mathew's Bibles, with notes and prefaces of a strongly Zwinglian character. In 1550 Cranmer published in his own name an elaborate treatise on the Eucharist, with the express object of disproving the doctrine of the Real Presence. Followed as it was

Appointment of Bucer and Peter Martyr, 1548.

Treatise of Cranmer, 1550.

[1] The choir belonged to the marquis of Winchester, who sold all the monuments and fittings and used it as a barn and a stable.

by the destruction of the altars, there could now be no doubt as to the policy of the government. Although the substitution of tables for altars did not necessarily imply any change of doctrine, yet it was obvious that a celebration of the Eucharist round a movable and mean table in the body of the church, or the middle of the chancel, instead of in front of a rich and imposing structure at the east end, could not but help to destroy the sense of reverence and mystery among ordinary worshippers and pave the way for lower ideas of the nature of the sacrament. Both parties accordingly prepared themselves for the struggle. Gardiner, not content with answering Cranmer from his prison, made use of his trial to give publicity to the proof that the doctrine of the Real Presence was the doctrine of the Church of England. Tunstall, bishop of Durham, supported the same cause in a learned treatise in Latin.

Undeterred by the storm which it was raising, the council proceeded on its path. In March 1551 Hooper was consecrated to the see of Gloucester. In opinion, Hooper was a thoroughly loyal and logical Zwinglian. He disbelieved in the priesthood as well as in the Real Presence. He desired not only to destroy the altars but to shut up the chancels and to receive the Communion standing. He looked upon the pope as antichrist, and had a special objection to wear a surplice or any distinctive officiating dress. For this reason he had at first refused to be consecrated, and the council were reduced to the singular expedient of committing a man to prison until he consented to be made a bishop. This severity, however, produced the desired obedience; and Hooper's consecration was quickly followed by that of Coverdale, who held similar opinions, to Exeter in August 1551.

Consecration of Hooper and Coverdale, 1551.

In the autumn of the year, royal commissions were issued to deprive Heath and Day of their bishoprics, and an absurd accusation of concealment of treason was trumped up against Tunstall of Durham, the last survivor of the pre-reformation bishops, in order to procure his committal to the Tower.

Deprivation of Heath and Day, 1551.

The way was thus prepared for a step which the archbishop and the council had been contemplating for some time. Hardly was the ink dry on the copies of the Prayer-book of 1549, than Cranmer began making notes with the view of its revision in a Protestant direction. The foreigners in England lent their assistance to the design. Even Calvin, from his stronghold at Geneva, wrote letters both to the king and the archbishop to stir up their zeal. In 1550 the archbishop brought the matter before Convocation, and there was a debate, but no action was taken. So Cranmer determined to act by himself. He summoned the archbishop of York and the bishops of London and Ely to his aid (for there is no record of a commission), and obtaining from Peter Martyr and Martin Bucer elaborate criticisms of the existing book, he began the reconstruction of the Prayer-book. The work was so far advanced by the end of 1551 that the council were prepared to throw over it the ægis of royal and parliamentary sanction, and the first business of the Parliament which met in January 1552 was to pass the second act of Uniformity.

Revision of the Prayer-book.

The statute began by stating that the first Prayer-book 'was a very godly order for Common Prayer and the Administration of the Sacraments, agreeable to the word of God and the Primitive Church, but doubts had arisen about the fashion of it through curiosity rather than any worthy cause,' so the king and Parliament had caused this said order to be explained and made perfect, and had ordered to be annexed to it the book of the ordinal. For these reasons the statute went on to make the new perfected Prayer-book part of the former statute of Uniformity, and protected it by the penalties of that act. By this somewhat cumbrous form of legislation Parliament treated the new Prayer-book as if it was only a schedule of alterations in the former book, and bound the two together as far as it possibly could, by going out of its way to assert the excellence of the older book, and to minimise the alterations made in it. Parliament, however, was not content with merely enforcing the use of the revised book by the clergy.

Second act of Uniformity, 1552.

It went on to compel the attendance of the laity at the revised services. The statute was not only an act of uniformity, it was also the first of the recusancy acts,[1] and provided for the punishment of recusants by ecclesiastical censures, and of separatists by imprisonment after the verdict of a jury. Thus began a melancholy chapter in the history of the Church of England.

General character of the Prayer-book of 1552.

It seems probable that when Parliament spoke slightingly of the changes introduced into the new Prayer book, that book had not reached the form which it afterwards attained. Nine months intervened between the passing of the act and the publication of the Prayer-book, and during all that time alterations were being suggested. Even while the copies were in the hands of the binder, only three days before the stated day of publication, the council of their own accord, against the wishes of Cranmer, ordered a declaration to be added (usually known as the black rubric), which asserted that by the practice of kneeling no adoration was intended to be implied towards any real or essential Presence of our Lord in the Sacramental Elements. This was most likely the work of Peter Martyr, and was inserted in consequence of a sermon preached before the king by Knox, the well-known Scottish Reformer, in which he had inveighed against kneeling at the reception of Communion. When the book appeared it was found that the alterations were very important. In the daily offices the exhortation, confession, and absolution of the present Prayer-book were prefixed to morning prayer. In the service for baptism the exorcism, the anointing, the ceremonial use of the white garment or chrysom were omitted, so was the anointing of the sick person in that of the visitation of the sick, and the ceremonies of delivering the chalice to the priest and the pastoral staff to a bishop in the ordinal. Throughout the whole book the wording of the prayers

[1] A recusant is a person who refuses to attend the services which the law prescribes. A separatist is a person who attends services other than those which the law prescribes.

was considerably modified in minor points, and a good many new prayers were added.

These alterations, however, had no special doctrinal significance. It was otherwise with those made in the office for Holy Communion. The word mass in the title was omitted, the use of the Eucharistic vestments was forbidden, and the only distinctive dresses permitted to be worn by officiating clergy were those of the rochet by bishops and the surplice by priests and deacons. In the service itself the introit was omitted, and the ten commandments and their responses put instead of the kyrie. In the canon all mention of saints and of the faithful departed and of the ministry of the holy angels was left out. The prayer that the elements about to be consecrated might be to the worshippers the Body and Blood of Christ was changed into a prayer that the communicants might be partakers of the Body and Blood of Christ. The directions to the celebrant to take the Elements into his hands at the moment of consecration were omitted. The suffrage, 'Christ our Paschal Lamb is offered up for us,' and the anthem, 'O Lamb of God,' which immediately followed the Consecration, were left out. The words of administration were changed from 'The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee,' etc., into 'Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee,' etc. Finally, the whole order of the service was disarranged. The *Gloria in Excelsis* which had always come at the beginning of the service was moved to the end. The confession, the absolution, and the comfortable words were inserted in the middle of the canon, between the prayer for the Church and the *Sanctus*, which was itself put out of its place. The prayer of humble access was placed before instead of after the Consecration, and the oblation of the congregation after the Communion instead of before. All reservation of the Consecrated Elements, even for the Communion of the sick, was forbidden.

Alterations in the service of the Holy Communion.

It has been said that the Prayer-book of 1552 differed from that of 1549 more than that of 1549 differed from the use of Sarum. This statement, if it refers to the extent of the alterations

made, is no doubt exaggerated; if it refers to their significance it is true, for the Prayer-book of 1552 was the first formulary used by the Church of England from the wording of which men might legitimately deduce the doctrine that the English Church did not necessarily teach the Real Presence of our Lord in the Eucharist. It would be ridiculous to maintain that the Prayer-book was not patient of that doctrine; but as long as it was in force it was no longer possible to use the weapon which Gardiner had wielded with such effect, that the formularies of the Church of England were patient of no other doctrine on that subject. By the abolition of the vestments, and the removal of words which could imply nothing else but the doctrine, especially the alteration of the words of administration, room had been found within the pale of the English Church for Cranmer and Hooper and Edward VI., as well as for Gardiner and Tunstall and Elizabeth. There can be little doubt that this was the object of the revisers. They were more afraid of the whole religious system of England breaking up through the fierce and self-assertive aggressiveness of men like Hooper, Horne, Knox, and the Gospellers, than they were of its being overthrown by a rising of the sluggish mass of discontented conservatives. Looking forward to the future, politicians like Northumberland saw that the only chance of successfully withstanding a reaction on the death of Edward was to unite the more ardent and thorough-going of his adherents on a basis which they could loyally accept. Religious men like Cranmer, disappointed with the evils around them, and prophetic of the evils to come, desired to find a common platform on which reasonable men could unite. The Prayer-book of 1552 reflects the influence of these shades of opinion. It was made unlike to the Latin mass to satisfy the extreme section. It retained the main features and teaching of the old services to reassure the moderate and conservative majority. It introduced carefully worded alterations of doctrine on the Eucharist to satisfy tender consciences. Thus it was a compromise. It marks the period when, for the first time, it was possible for

Significance of the alterations.

men to hold widely different views on the question of the Eucharist and yet maintain that they were justified by the Prayer-book. It marks also the extreme point to which the Church of England ever went in the direction of compromise with those who held Zwinglian or Calvinistic views on that subject. If rigid theologians are inclined to think that she went too far and gravely compromised her Catholicity, they may find comfort in the thought that the second Prayer-book of Edward VI. never had the slightest claim to any ecclesiastical authority, and cannot even plead acceptance by the Church, for it was only in force about eight months, and probably was never used at all in many parts of England.

Side by side with the revision of the Prayer-book, Cranmer and the bishops had been engaged in compiling a confession of faith, a catechism, and a primer to supersede the *King's Book* of 1543 and the authorised primer of 1546. As long ago as the end of the reign of Henry VIII., when the Lutheran delegates were in England, the archbishop had drawn up thirteen Articles of Religion, which were mainly taken from the confession of Augsburg. By 1550 these thirteen had grown into a code of forty, to which he required the assent of all candidates for a preacher's licence. From their birth, therefore, it seems that the Articles were mainly used as a test of clerical orthodoxy. It was now desired to promulgate them as a confession of the true faith of the Church of England on the points on which they treated. The council accordingly took them up, had them revised by a commission which was revising the canon law, and published them to the number of forty-two by royal authority alone in May 1553. By an almost incredible piece of effrontery they asserted in the title that the Articles had been approved by Convocation, when they had never been submitted to that body in any shape whatever. It was a gratuitous deception. Combined with the Articles was a catechism intended for those who had already mastered the children's catechism in the Prayer-book. It was drawn up by Ponet, bishop of Winchester. Lastly came the authorised

The forty-two Articles, 1553.

The catechism and primer, 1553.

primer which followed very closely the wording of the Prayer-book. All three formularies were marked by the same characteristics as the Prayer-book. They represent the minds of men who were anxious to include as much as possible of the newer Protestant spirit without departing from the historical faith of the Church, except in the matter of the sacrament of the Eucharist. They accordingly use Protestant, not mediæval, phrases and definitions, but alter them so as to deprive them of distinctively Protestant meaning, except in the Article upon the Eucharist, where the doctrine of the Real Presence is denied. This was replaced by another form when the Articles were republished in Elizabeth's reign in the more familiar number of thirty-nine.

But the sun of the short and gloomy reign of Edward VI. was about to set. By May 1553 the insidious disease which had for so long been sapping the vitality while it stimulated the intellect of the boy-king had made such progress that all about him recognised that the end was near. Summoning all his strength and all his power of will for a last heroic effort, and pleading as only a dying king can plead with those who were opposed to his wishes, he forced on a reluctant council a settlement of the kingdom, which was to hand England over to Northumberland and his family. By an unheard-of and illegal stretch of prerogative he issued letters patent signed by the council, depriving both his sisters of their rights to the crown, and appointing his cousin, Lady Jane Grey, who had married Northumberland's third son, to succeed him. No doubt in doing this he was mainly actuated by the desire to give permanence to the existing religious system. Yet if in the sleepless hours of illness he reflected on the past years of his reign and saw things as they really were, he must have found but little cause for congratulation. For the first and only time in her history England had been in the power of an oligarchy absolutely irresponsible and utterly unscrupulous, who rested their power on the swords of foreign soldiers of fortune. In foreign affairs their rule had been marked by an ignominious treaty with Scotland and the loss of

Attempted revolution of Northumberland, 1553.

Retrospect of the reign.

Boulogne, the last prize of Henry VIII. At home the misery of the poor and the extortion of the rich were the theme of every writer and preacher, and melancholy proof of the truth of their charges was seen in the rebellion of Ket in 1549 and the large increase of pauperism. Waste and peculation were so rife that in spite of the enormous sums that had flowed into the royal coffers since 1536 from the destruction of the religious houses and chantries and hospitals, from the wealth of countless shrines, and from the Church plate and furniture, and the appropriation of large parts of the endowments of bishoprics and collegiate churches, the king was heavily in debt in 1553, and had to ask Parliament for a substantial grant. It has been calculated that during the reign of Edward VI. alone the council and their friends appropriated estates worth five millions of our money, and that by the end of the reign hardly any of the estates of the dissolved corporations remained in the king's hands. No doubt some small part of this was devoted by the piety of Edward to the refounding of the hospitals of Bridewell, S. Bartholomew, and S. Thomas in London, and the endowment of grammar schools in different parts of the country which were of incalculable benefit to posterity, but it was a mere drop in comparison with the ocean which flowed into the pockets of the greedy courtiers. Already the endowments of two of the six bishoprics founded by Henry VIII. from the spoils of the monasteries had been re-absorbed by the crown. Westminster was appropriated in 1550, while after the deprivation of Heath the see of Gloucester was united to that of Worcester and its revenues seized for the king. The deprivation of Tunstall, bishop of Durham, in the same year, was the first step in a similar scheme, and an act for the dissolution of the palatine bishopric was actually passed by the Parliament of 1553 though never carried out.

In the affairs of religion things were but little better. The civil government had seized upon the ecclesiastical machinery which it found ready to its hand, and made itself responsible for its working. Bishops had become but the executive officers of the crown in the department of religion. Con-

vocation had been used merely to throw an illusive haze of ecclesiastical authority over the action of the council. And what had been the result of so great a revolution? No doubt in the services of the Church a more primitive standard of devotional expression, a more intelligible standard of ceremonial simplicity, and the removal of the terrible incubus of a dead language, had been attained at the cost of much which was beautiful and instructive. The removal of restrictions on clerical marriage had considerably diminished some clerical difficulties, while increasing others. But there the record of advantages stops. If we are to believe the preachers of the day, themselves hearty adherents of the Edwardine reformation, never since the dark ages was there a clergy so ignorant, simony so prevalent, devotion so wanting, immorality so rife, as in the days of Edward VI. Hooper, in a visitation of his diocese in 1552, found one hundred and sixty-eight priests who could not say the ten commandments, and thirty-one who did not know the Author of the Lord's Prayer. Patrons, finding the bishops careless as to whom they admitted to orders, appointed their servants to benefices on condition of the surrender of the bulk of the endowment. 'Darvel Gadern, the Welsh idol that was burned at Smithfield, might have had a benefice,' indignantly exclaimed Bernard Gilpin in a sermon before the king in 1553, 'if he could have set his hand to a bill to let the patron take the most of the benefits.' If we are to accept his authority there had never been a sermon in some parishes since the friars were ousted, and the universities had so decayed that they only numbered hundreds where there used to be thousands. Three years before, Latimer, in the last sermon he ever preached at court, had dwelt on the immorality of the age: 'Never was there so much adultery and so much divorcing. Bring into the Church of England open discipline of excommunication that open sinners may be stricken withal.' From all sides swelled the chorus of complaint as the years went on. If the Reformation had helped to effect a purification of religion it certainly had not yet tended to produce innocency of life, or contributed to nobleness of character, and many of

those pious and earnest souls like Cranmer and Hooper, Latimer and Gilpin, who had welcomed the accession of Edward as the rising of the morning star, must in their heart of hearts, as the grave closed over his remains, have thanked God that the righteous was taken away in his youth from the evil to come.

On the death of Edward VI. the people of England arose in their might like Samson from his sleep, and cast to the winds the frail bands with which Edward and Northumberland had vainly endeavoured to compress their liberties. Seldom has a sovereign ascended the throne of England with such universal content as did Mary Tudor. Suddenly, as by the flash of a search light, the hollowness of the system pursued by the government of the late king stood revealed. The reformation in the reign of Henry VIII. had been the work of a great man and a popular king. Tyrannical as he undoubtedly was towards individuals, Henry had never lost the confidence of the nation at large. The council, in the reign of Edward VI., had never gained it. They were men small in ability, mean in character, selfish in policy. England was quick to note the contrast. The Reformation under their management was tainted with sordidness. It produced destruction and confiscation, but not improvement, and England endured it without accepting it. When it associated itself with revolution she rebelled against it; and in a hot outburst of indignation against the minority who had so abused their trust, sought to recall the days of Henry in the person of Mary, and sent the foreign mercenaries and the foreign reformers scampering over sea for their lives, as in the days of old the Norman adventurers had fled from the face of Earl Godwine.

Accession of Mary Tudor, 1553.

But the days of Henry were not to be recalled, and the policy of Henry was not to be restored. Mary had never herself accepted the Henrician reformation. Naturally enough, to the daughter of Catherine of Arragon the whole movement seemed marked with the deep stain of her mother's wrong. She was at heart a Spaniard and not an Englishwoman. Events had

Mary a Roman Catholic by conviction.

necessarily made her so. She could not understand the passionate patriotism of the English race; she shut her mind to the national and independent claims of the English Church. To her the Church meant the pope. Every tie of loyalty to the memory of her mother, of resentment against her own unworthy treatment, of despair for the loveless lot to which she had been condemned in her youth, of hope for the promise of the new life that was opening to her in middle age, bound her irretrievably to the papacy. Mary Tudor was the first Roman Catholic sovereign of England. She accepted to the full the universal headship of the pope over the Church as a religious dogma. The breach with the papacy which had taken place under her father's direction appeared to her as a national sin, and she could not rest until it had been expiated. In the Middle Ages the pope had been looked upon, both by people as well as statesmen, as a person who had in virtue of his succession from S. Peter certain administrative and traditional rights over the local church, the extent of which was matter of constitutional bargain and arrangement. Normally and properly the local church should be on terms of amity with him, and pay him the deference due to his rank. But if, as would sometimes happen, he pushed his claims further than was just, an interruption of amicable relations would occur. The conditions of the ecclesiastical world would become for a time abnormal, and ecclesiastical and civil authorities would do the best they could under the circumstances to assert their rights, and carry on the affairs of the Church until peace was again happily restored, without any suspicion that they were incurring the guilt of schism, much less of heresy. This is what Henry VIII. had done; and had Mary ascended the throne on her father's death, there is little doubt that a satisfactory arrangement with the pope was not beyond the powers of statesmanship, by which the rights of the English Church and a large measure of self-government would have been acknowledged, in return for the admission of certain administrative and financial authority in the pope, and the acceptance of his patriarchal position.

The policy of Edward VI. had made this impossible. The

defacement of the churches, the destruction of the altars, the abolition of vestments, the promotion of foreign Protestants, the writings and teaching of Cranmer and Ridley and Hooper and Knox supported and encouraged by the government, had done much to compromise the position of the Church of England. An attack had been made on the historical creed of the Church in two most important particulars—the doctrine of the Eucharist and the doctrine of the Ministry. England was rapidly becoming divided into two camps—that of Calvinism and that of Catholicism. In the face of the danger from Calvinism, which was great because of the position, not of the numbers, of its adherents, men who were attached to the creed and practice of the Church felt that the time for bargain and arrangement was over. The forces devoted to the historic creed must unite on any terms rather than by their disunion allow the enemy to triumph. Above all things it was necessary to stand firm under their leader and follow where she pointed the way. When Gardiner and Bonner and Tunstall and Heath came out of their prisons and assumed the leadership of affairs under the queen, they found themselves face to face with this tremendous difficulty. They were to a man pledged to the policy of Henry VIII. They had striven their hardest to maintain the purity of the Catholic faith, while repudiating the exaggerations of the papal claims. They had spent the best years of their lives in maintaining the national and historical rights of the English Church. But now in the very crisis of their country's fate they found themselves under the leadership of a sovereign who disbelieved in all these principles, and required of them, not to bargain with the pope, but to submit to him. They were to turn their backs upon their past lives, and acknowledge, not merely that their judgment had been mistaken, but that their action had been sinful.

Consequent division of England into Roman Catholic and Protestant.

For six months the struggle swayed to and fro. Gardiner and the English party threw their whole weight into the scale to induce the queen to follow an English policy, marry an Englishman, and content herself with restoring the ecclesiastical policy of her

father. Parliament, in the session of 1553, merely repealed the ecclesiastical legislation of Edward VI. Even the title of supreme head, abused as it had been, was not laid aside till March 1554. Eventually the infatuation of the queen for Philip of Spain decided the question. When she made up her mind to marry Philip, it was clear to everybody that the coming of the Spaniard meant the return of the pope. Nothing but the queen's death could now restore the system of Henry VIII. A revolution which overthrew her throne, as the rebellion of Sir Thomas Wyatt soon showed, would mean a return to the days of Edward VI. and the Prayer-book of 1552, not to those of Henry VIII. and the *King's Book* of 1543. There was no reason to expect the speedy occurrence of the one, much less to desire the success of the other. In all human probability it seemed certain that the *via media* of Henry VIII. was shattered to pieces. The choice for Gardiner and his supporters became a simple alternative: on the one side absolute submission to the pope, on the other the hearty acceptance of the Edwardine reformation. When the question had thus narrowed itself there could be no doubt as to the answer, and Gardiner and his friends prepared with heavy hearts but perfect loyalty to see England follow humbly in the wake of Spain and the papacy. Much as they disliked the foreigner, little as they cared for the pope, they preferred the presence of the Spanish prince to that of the German or the Swiss reformer, and the papacy of Rome to that of Geneva. In November 1554 the anti-papal legislation of Henry VIII. was repealed, the heresy laws re-enacted, and the nation solemnly absolved from its sin, and admitted to communion with the Church of Rome by the papal legate Reginald Pole.

The party of Henry VIII. becomes Roman Catholic, 1554.

England absolved by the pope, 1554.

Well had it been for Mary Tudor and her ministers if she had rested content with her triumph. The nation, though strongly opposed to Spanish domination, was passionately loyal. The veneer of Protestantism cast over it in the days of Edward VI was soon seen to be exceedingly thin. In London and those parts of the country chiefly open to influence

Attitude of the nation.

from Holland and Germany, there was a considerable number of enthusiastic but illiterate men, generally known as Gospellers, who had adopted the extremest form of Protestant opinions. But they were made of material which refuses to be included in any system, and is only dangerous when used to light the lurid fires of an *auto da fè*. The substantial middle classes of the towns and the yeomen of the country, in their honest resentment at ecclesiastical misgovernment and papal exaction, had secured the success of the policy of Henry VIII. In their turn they had learned that English statesmen cou'd be as extortionate as the pope, and were willing enough to take back the pope if the queen wished it, if she would only give them just and good rule. The nobility were perfectly ready to accept of any religious change which did not threaten their ill-gotten possessions. All that Mary had to do to preserve her popularity and secure the permanence of the religious settlement which she had effected, was to keep England scrupulously free from all complicity in her husband's continental policy, and maintain a strict but impartial and tolerant government.

Morbid views of the queen, 1555-8.

Unfortunately for her this was precisely what her conscience did not permit her to do. In her narrow and obstinate nature, warped by past years of unmerited neglect, lacerated by the ever-present sting of unrequited love, justice, not mercy, appeared the first and most sacred of duties. The cloud which fell upon her own life, the disappointment of the expected heir, the development of incurable disease, the sense of her growing unpopularity with her people, the warfare of nature herself against her, the storms which ravaged the coasts, the blight which destroyed the crops, the last and most terrible disgrace of the loss of Calais, all seemed to her the awful judgments of an offended God, demanding from her by His portents vengeance upon His enemies. As each new misfortune wrung her heart or threatened her throne, fresh batches of victims were sent to the stake by the miserable queen, in the despairing hope that by human sacrifice she could appease the wrath of Heaven. History in its compassion for her

wrongs, in its pity for her sex, has tried in vain to find in her the victim, not the author, of so terrible a policy, and has sought to cast the blame of the massacres upon the vengeance of Gardiner, the brutality of Bonner, or the cruelty of the Spaniards. But the clearer light of recent research has scattered such figments to the winds, and for good or for ill Mary Tudor must stand at the bar alone to answer for the stain of blood which lies so deep across the page which records the few years of her reign. There was no question of danger to her government. Unlike Elizabeth or William III., she cannot plead on her behalf that the same people who denied her religion also opposed her rule and even threatened her life. Cranmer, it is true, had formally enrolled himself among the adherents of the revolution of Northumberland, and had Mary chosen to include him with Guildford Dudley and Lady Jane Grey among the victims of that wild scheme, and executed him as a traitor, no one could have said that the sentence, though severe, was undeserved. But this was exactly what she did not do. She spared him as a traitor, she condemned him as a heretic. About the other victims no question could arise. Hooper and Latimer, Ridley and Ferrar, were men of religious influence, but not of political importance, and had not taken any part against Mary. The vast majority of those who suffered were not people even of religious influence. They were illiterate fanatics incapable of understanding the difficulty of the religious questions in dispute, but convinced that the pope was antichrist and Transubstantiation idolatry. Accordingly, when the law had once been put in motion against them, it was impossible for their judges to avoid condemning them, for they would not accept any formulary which was drawn up for them to sign, and they were not capable of giving a scientific explanation of their own belief. There is no reason to think that they met with any greater harshness of treatment than was customary in those times. In some cases great pains were taken, notably by Bonner, to find a way to avoid condemning them, but their courage and their honesty combined with their ignorance to make all such attempts hopeless. The fault

Character of the Marian persecutions.

lay not so much with the judges who administered the law as with the legislature who had revived the heresy statutes, and above all with the queen who insisted on putting them in force. Never did the crimes of a perverted conscience so quickly bring retribution. For three years England was given up to religious persecution, and about 300 men and women testified to their beliefs at the stake. By the end of that time the smoke of the fires had obscured in the minds of the nation all memory of the misery and rapacity of the previous reign. The flames had scorched out of the heart of the people all remnant of love for their fanatical sovereign. Neglected by her husband, hated by her people, despised by Europe, Mary sank into the grave in bitter consciousness that her life had been sacrificed in vain, and her work had failed.

Death of Mary, 1558.

After two reigns of misery and disgrace, England was at last to reap the reward of her endurance. Elizabeth was no ordinary person. A true daughter of Henry VIII., she possessed to the full that magnetic power of leadership which is the essential attribute of a great sovereign. Endowed by birth with a will as strong and a nature as passionate as that of her father, she had learned in the school of adversity to hold both in reserve. She added to the strong grasp which she held on affairs, craft and unscrupulousness in manipulating them, which sprang from a callous and absolutely selfish heart. She never wavered in her pursuit of an object, but she cared not how crooked the paths might be which led her to her end. In her diplomacy, lying was raised to the dignity of a fine art. At her court she lived on flattery so gross as to be positively nauseous. She sacrificed her servants unhesitatingly and treated them with the meanness of a miser. Yet she never lost sight of the greatness of the nation, saw its true interests, and followed them steadily. Under her, slowly but surely, as the years went on, by thrift, by policy, by just administration, wealth increased, prosperity returned, art and literature once more lifted up their heads from the slough into which the Reformation had thrown them, the national spirit

Accession and character of Elizabeth, 1558.

revived, the genius of adventure in zealous rivalry with the hated Spaniard made the foundations of the maritime power of England strong, until in the crisis of the armada, to the astonishment of the world, the rough sea-dogs of Devonshire proved themselves more than a match for the most formidable of European princes; and Elizabeth stood forth among a people intoxicated with patriotism as the incarnation of the national greatness.

In matters of religion Elizabeth was seen at her best. Without being, in any true sense of the word, a religious woman, or disinclined to apply Church property to her own use if occasion offered, she was strongly and intelligently attached to the doctrine and the organisation of the Catholic Church. Lutheran and Calvinistic opinions had no attraction for her whatever. Further than this, she had learned by the experience of her father and her brother the mistake of intruding the royal authority into the ecclesiastical sphere, and governing the Church as a department of the State. Without for one moment intending to permit the ecclesiastical power to assert authority over the State, she was determined to make it effective in the administration, and responsible for the welfare, of the affairs of religion. Like William I. or Edward I. she would admit of no rival to herself in her own kingdom, but subject to that limitation would be careful to preserve the independent authority of the ecclesiastical power. Starting from these principles she laid down the lines of her religious policy clearly and straightforwardly. National independence was the pivot of the whole as it had been with her father. She claimed the right of the English Church to alter her own services, modify her own organisation, and restate her own formularies, apart from the consent of the pope, without in any way incurring the guilt of schism or heresy. If the pope refused to acquiesce in her action the blame of disunion must rest upon him.

Her religious policy.

But the assertion of national and kingly rights did not mean the absorption of the national Church into the national State. It was no new organisation that was being created; it was not even a profound and far-reaching modification of an old organisation that

was being accomplished. It was rather a restoration under somewhat altered conditions of relations between the two co-ordinate powers of Church and State familiar to ten centuries of English churchmen. What Ælfred and William I. had exercised without question, Elizabeth claimed to exercise still. What Henry VIII. and Edward VI. had exercised contrary to the recognition of the supremacy by the clergy, contrary to the principles of the constitution, Elizabeth firmly repudiated. The first act of Parliament of the new reign was called an 'act to restore to the crown its ancient jurisdiction in ecclesiastical matters.' The title, supreme head of the Church of England, which had been so abused, was for that very reason deliberately discarded, and the subordinate title of supreme governor was adopted instead. The royal injunctions issued in the same year were careful to explain that by the phrase, supreme governor, was meant only 'the authority under God to have the sovereignty and rule over all manner of persons born within her realms, of what estate, ecclesiastical or temporal, soever they be, so as no other foreign power shall or ought to have any superiority over them.' Nothing could be clearer than the repudiation by Elizabeth of any claim on behalf of her crown to be the source of ecclesiastical jurisdiction or the motive power of ecclesiastical organisation.

Her constitutional position, 1558.

The restoration of true principles of policy in the relations of Church and State presented no serious difficulties. The restoration of the English services was a very different matter, and required the most careful handling. Elizabeth herself desired in this as in other things to return to the policy of her father. Looking on the Prayer-book of 1549 as the legitimate completion of that policy, she was anxious to adopt a standard which men as different as Gardiner, Tunstall, Ridley, and Latimer had been able to use. But in carrying out this policy she found herself in the presence of an insuperable obstacle. It was impossible to enforce the measures of Henry VIII. without the help of the men with whom those measures were identified. But the party of Henry VIII.,

Impossibility of restoring the Prayer-book of 1549.

as we have seen, had been scattered to the winds by the combined influence of the revolutionary policy of Northumberland and the reactionary policy of Mary. Heath, Tunstall, Bonner, and Pate, the most prominent of the supporters of Henry who still survived, had made their submission to the pope. Gardiner and Day were dead. Elizabeth had not at her command a single man who was heart-whole with her in her policy. The men who were ready to hand were those who, like Cox and Jewel and Sandys, had welcomed the revision of 1552, had fled over sea in the days of Mary to Bullinger at Zürich and Calvin at Geneva, and had come back to England anxious to win their country over to the religious principles of Switzerland. So far from being prepared to enforce the Prayer-book of 1549, they looked upon that of 1552 as tolerable[1] only until something more thorough could be attained. They accepted it as a concession to the weakness of the queen and the backwardness of the nation. They looked forward to the time when it should be further purged of superstition and brought into harmony with the teaching of Calvin. Such were the opinions of the men on whom Elizabeth had largely to rely for the government of the Church. With her usual good sense she saw that she must abate something of her own wishes if she wanted to secure a settlement which should last. It was idle to put into the hands of Calvinists the Prayer-book of 1549 and expect them honestly to enforce it.

So she accepted the inevitable, and applied herself to making such alterations in the book of 1552 as would effectually absolve it from all suspicion of heresy without laying any great burden on the consciences of the bishops. The alterations were few but important. The 'black rubric,' introduced by the council at the last moment, was taken away. The old form of the words of administration associated imperishably with so many centuries of church life and teaching was restored, and the new form added to it, and so deprived of any heterodox suggestion which it might have been thought to

The Prayer-book of 1559.

[1] *Tolerabiles ineptiæ* was Calvin's own description of its contents.

have when it stood alone. Lastly, a rubric was added authorising the use of the same 'ornaments of the Church and of the ministers thereof as were in use by the authority of Parliament in the second year of Edward VI.,' until the queen took other order. As the queen never did take any other order, this rubric authorised the use of the Eucharistic vestments, and practically permitted the furnishing of churches and chancels as they had been at the end of the reign of Henry VIII. As a matter of fact, owing to the destruction which had taken place under Edward VI., and the quick growth of Calvinistic opinion in the reign of Elizabeth, very little advantage was taken of the permission. Such were the outlines of the settlement of religious affairs effected by Elizabeth. It was not intended to be in any sense final. It was but the best possible under the circumstances. Among the leaders who accepted it there were probably few who did not hope to see it altered in one direction or the other. Nevertheless, in spite of its obvious defects, it seemed to recommend itself readily enough to the mass of the people. Mary died on the 17th of November 1558. Within a few days Reginald Pole, the archbishop of Canterbury, followed her to the grave. To quiet the apprehensions of the nation, Elizabeth at once issued a proclamation forbidding any alteration in the Latin services until the meeting of Parliament, and was herself crowned according to the old rite, and attended mass, merely requiring the discontinuance of the ceremony of elevation of the Host.

When Parliament met in January 1559 it immediately turned its attention to the act of Supremacy. This famous statute began by reviving ten of the ecclesiastical statutes of the reign of Henry VIII., and one of those of Edward VI., *i.e.* against irreverent speaking against the Sacrament. Those of Henry VIII. which were revived included the statutes of Annates, Appeals, the submission of the Clergy, and Dispensations, but did not include the Supreme Head statute. Thus the constitutional position of the Church, both as regards the pope and the crown, was put back to the condition in which Henry VIII. left it, except the supreme headship,

The act of Supremacy, 1559.

which was abolished. It then went on to provide that the visitatorial and reforming powers, which were declared by the Supreme Head statute to be part of the prerogatives of the supremacy, should remain annexed to the crown, but be exercised by a regularly constituted court of justice, known to history as the court of High Commission. Thus the danger of capricious and arbitrary exercise of the reforming powers of the crown, according to the personal will of the wearer or the exigencies of policy, was reduced to a minimum. Protection was further given to opinion by the enactment that nothing was to be treated as heresy except what was decided to be heresy by Scripture, the first four general councils, or by the decision of Convocation with the assent of Parliament. The election of bishops by the old system of *congé d'élire* was restored, and an oath of obedience to the crown as supreme governor in the realm, both over things ecclesiastical as well as civil, was imposed upon all clergy and public officials. When the act of Supremacy was passed, Parliament went on to make the new Prayer book of 1559 the only legal service-book. The act of Uniformity, like its predecessor, contained provisions for the punishment of recusants as well as separatists. Other acts passed in the same session dissolved queen Mary's religious foundations and vested them in the crown, re-annexed first-fruits to the crown, and actually empowered the crown, on the vacancy of a see, to exchange lands belonging to the see for tithe belonging to the crown. It is hardly necessary to add that whenever advantage was taken of this statute the justice of the exchange seemed much more evident to the treasurer than to the bishop.

The act of Uniformity, 1559.

By the summer of 1559 all was complete, as far as the queen with the assistance of Parliament could make it. The position of the Church of England in her reliance upon Scripture and upon antiquity, her claim to special national rights of self-government, her denial of the modern doctrine of the divine prerogative of the papacy, the definition of her relations to the papacy and to the crown, had

The consent of Convocation dispensed with.

all been carefully dealt with and asserted in the legislation of the session. But the arrangements thus arrived at could boast of no sort of ecclesiastical sanction whatever. They were purely the work of the civil government. Convocation had not been consulted either about the Prayer-book of 1559 or about the act of Supremacy. It is true that the constitutional arrangement of 1559 was not substantially different from that which had been accepted by the clergy in the time of Henry VIII., but considering how great had been the changes which had taken place since, it could hardly be maintained that so indirect a sanction of principles could be of avail. But not even that much of approval can be pleaded for the Prayer-book. Neither in its original form of 1552 nor in its revised form of 1559 did it receive any ecclesiastical sanction whatever. Convocation was not consulted, and the vote of the bishops in the House of Lords was given unanimously against both the act of Supremacy and that of Uniformity. The sanction which the Elizabethan compromise may rightly claim to have from the Church is not that of formal acceptance but of subsequent acquiescence. As such it is really more binding, because more searching, than the formal vote of an official body. When the oath to the act of Supremacy and the obligation to use the new Prayer-book were offered to the consciences of the clergy, they were found to present no difficulties except to those who by their public action had identified themselves with the papacy in the days of Mary. Thirteen of the fourteen bishops, all of whom had either been appointed to their sees or released from their captivity by Mary, steadily refused to take the oath, but of the inferior clergy it is said that not 300 followed their example. The number may be understated, but it is certain that the proportion of those who refused to accept the Elizabethan reformation was exceedingly small. From no part of the country, from no section of the people, except from the Marian bishops themselves, came any protest whatever in favour of the authority of the pope.

Subsequent acceptance by the Church.

The unanimity of the bishops, however, seriously increased the

difficulties of Elizabeth. By the combined effect of death and of deprivation on refusal to take the oath of supremacy, Kitchin, bishop of Llandaff, was the only bishop in the autumn of 1559 in unquestioned occupancy of his see, though the bishops appointed by Edward VI. and deprived by Mary, like Coverdale of Exeter, came back to their old sees as soon as they could. It became therefore absolutely essential to fill the archbishopric of Canterbury and the vacant sees without any delay. But there was a serious difficulty in finding men for the posts. The more able of those who had accepted the legislation of the previous session, Grindal, Cox, and Jewel, were all tainted with the Swiss opinions which they had contracted on their travels in the days of Mary. It was dangerous to appoint them to be the administrators of a system of which they did not approve. But there was no help for it. Fortunately, for the most important place of all, Elizabeth had ready to her hand an unexceptionable candidate. Matthew Parker was a man learned, amiable, conscientious, moderate, against whose character no breath of suspicion had ever been breathed, and whose fidelity the queen could absolutely trust. On July 18th, 1559, the *congé d'élire* was issued for his election to the see of Canterbury. On August 18th he was canonically elected. On December 9th his election was confirmed, and on the 17th of December he was consecrated according to the new ordinal in Lambeth chapel by Barlow, bishop of Bath and Wells; Scory, bishop of Chichester; Coverdale, bishop of Exeter; and Hodgkin, suffragan bishop of Thetford. Of these, Barlow and Hodgkin had been consecrated according to the Sarum rite, Coverdale and Scory according to the ordinal of 1550. A few days later Parker consecrated eleven bishops to the vacant sees, including Grindal to London, Jewel to Salisbury, and Guest to Rochester, and thus the episcopate was restored to its usual strength.

Consecration of Parker, 1559.

Next in importance to the maintenance of the episcopate came that of the priesthood. The wholesale confiscations of endowments connected with the Church in the days of Henry VIII. and Edward VI., and the impoverishment of the country consequent

on the misgovernment under Edward and Mary, had borne its inevitable fruit in the decay of learning and the depletion of the universities. In the Middle Ages there had been in the numerous schools of different sorts maintained by religious organisations a system of training for candidates for Holy Orders of a rough and ready kind. The Reformation had taken this away without providing anything in its place. In many cases it had done worse. It had supplanted clerical patrons, who at the worst used their patronage for the benefit of their order, by lay patrons who used it for the benefit of themselves; while the religious dissensions naturally tended to make men hesitate in offering themselves as candidates for the priesthood. Throughout the reigns of Edward VI. and Mary complaints had been rife of the number of cures vacant all over the country, and of the difficulty in finding men of sufficient learning able to take them in their impoverished condition. The refusal of the bishops and their followers to accept the Prayer-book in 1559 made matters worse, and archbishop Parker and his freshly consecrated bishops found themselves in the unenviable position of having to recommend the new Prayer book to the nation by means of a clergy few in number, impoverished in pocket, and of little intellectual or spiritual distinction. They did what they could. Large ordinations held in the year 1560 helped to fill up the gaps in the priesthood. The minor order of Lector was revived for those who were too ignorant for the priesthood, laymen received licences to read the daily offices, and in some cases foreigners, who had only been set apart for the ministry by German or Swiss pastors, were admitted to serve English parishes. Such arrangements were wholly irregular, and were subsequently made impossible in 1662. At the time they were looked upon as justified by the necessity of the case. Even when recourse had been had to these exceptional measures the sad truth remained that the English Church found herself in a greater state of spiritual and intellectual destitution at the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth than she had experienced since the coming of the Normans. It was not until a generation had grown up under the influence of the

Provision for the vacant cures.

Prayer-book and the Bible that, under the leadership of Hooker, the clergy of the Church of England began once more to take their rightful place in the intellectual and religious world.

Meanwhile the completion of the formularies went on under the guidance of Parker and the watchful care of the queen.[1] In 1562 the forty-two Articles of 1552 were revised and reduced to thirty-nine by a committee of bishops, but the draft was not finally agreed upon by Convocation and the queen, and promulgated, till 1571. In the same year the second book of the Homilies was approved and issued. The constructive work of Elizabeth was thus complete. The Prayer-book set the standard of doctrine and worship. The decisions of the undivided Church based on the teaching of Scripture formed the ultimate test of heresy. The Articles safeguarded certain points of doctrine from mediæval and sixteenth century exaggerations. The Homilies suggested to preachers the line of teaching which the bishops desired they should follow. The act of Supremacy explained by the queen's injunctions and proclamations, and accepted by the clergy, made the constitutional position of the Church clear. With her organisation untouched, her independent spiritual authority[2] unimpaired, her right and her power to discharge her own duties in her own sphere unquestioned, but freely acknowledging the corresponding right of the crown to see that those duties were discharged, the Church of England prepared boldly to address herself to the problems of the coming age.

Issue of the Articles and Homilies, 1571.

NOTE D

THE ROYAL SUPREMACY

In the Middle Ages, as we have seen, the kings of England were very careful to maintain the ecclesiastical authority of the crown, both as

[1] Elizabeth inserted the statement in Article xx., that the Church hath authority in controversies of faith, with her own hand.

[2] It is perhaps hardly necessary to point out that the act of 1565 (8 Eliz. c. 1), which is sometimes quoted to prove that Elizabeth claimed authority for the State in the spiritual sphere, only applies to some *legal* objections to the validity of certain consecrations, and does not deal with their *spiritual* validity at all.

against the pope in his capacity as a foreign power outside the realm which claimed privileges within it, and as against ecclesiastical persons within the realm in their capacity as subjects. This authority depended upon two great principles which were constantly asserted and re-asserted throughout English history.

First among these principles was the duty of the king to see that all his subjects were properly governed, both as members of the Church and as members of the State. In both relations their persons and their property were under the guardianship of the king, and their conduct subject to his laws. Their souls alone were outside his power, under the sole care of the Church. The king, therefore, was bound to see that they were not made to suffer in their person or property from a pretended advantage to their souls, and that the rules for their conduct, made by the ecclesiastical authorities for the good of their souls, were within the competence of the ecclesiastical authority to make, and had in reality the character which was claimed for them. This supreme guardianship over all his subjects born in his realm was of the very essence of kingly authority, and had far-reaching results. The king inherited it as he did his other powers in the constitution. It was no arbitrary or capricious power to be exercised or neglected at his will. It had its roots in past history. It came to each successive sovereign in the shape of ancient rights and ancient customs which he had no right to neglect, but was bound to exercise should occasion arise, or confess himself unfit for his position. It involved the right in the king to prevent any power outside the realm from exercising any authority affecting persons or property within it except by permission. It involved his right to demand the allegiance of all his subjects as long as he did not require from them to be untrue to their religion. It involved the delicate task of holding the balance true between exaggerated claims of greedy popes and turbulent ecclesiastics, and the ignorant demands of agitators or more often the angry remonstrances of Parliaments. It was essentially, therefore, a regulating force, the function of which was to decide in what spheres and under what conditions the spiritual power, which it recognised as independent in origin and authority, should act. Thus we find during the whole of the Middle Ages, or during some part of them, the acknowledged prerogative of the crown in ecclesiastical matters included the right to decide which of two or more rival candidates for the papacy should be acknowledged, the right to refuse admission to the country to papal legates, the right to refuse admission to papal bulls and letters, the right to refuse to allow appeals to go to Rome, the right to sanction the meeting of

ecclesiastical assemblies, to regulate ecclesiastical jurisdiction, to appoint archbishops and bishops, to check papal taxation and papal patronage, to outlaw and punish clergy who obeyed the pope rather than the king in matters relating to taxation and patronage. English kings in the Middle Ages never claimed to have in themselves the power to administer the affairs of the Church, to make spiritual laws, to decide spiritual cases, to be the source of spiritual jurisdiction, any more than they claimed the power to discharge spiritual duties. But inasmuch as the administration of the affairs of the Church within the realm involved questions affecting the welfare and peace of their subjects, the security of property, and sometimes the honour and dignity of the crown, they claimed to exercise and did habitually exercise a supervision over the administration of the Church, with the object of securing to each man and to each authority its just rights and of restraining encroachments on either side.

Secondly, the king was himself not merely head of the State, but the eldest son of the Church and her recognised champion. His office was one of sacred responsibility. Over and above his personal responsibility to God for his own soul, common to him and all his subjects, was a special responsibility laid upon him as king for the religious welfare of his people, for the maintenance and protection of the Church. This principle naturally comes into much greater prominence at some periods of history than at others. It lies at the root of Ælfred's ecclesiastical legislation. It is strong in the breast of William I. and Henry V. It is the guiding principle of the policy of Henry VIII., and finds clear expression in the language of the preamble to the Annates Act of 1532, the first great anti-papal statute, in which Parliament is made to say that 'the king's highness before Almighty God is bound as by the duty of a good Christian prince for the conservation of the good estate and commonwealth of his realm' to repress and redress the exactions of the papal court.

The right of the crown to exercise a supervision over the administration of the affairs of the Church, and the duty of the crown to champion the religious welfare of its people, were then well-acknowledged parts of the constitution in Church and State at the time when Henry VIII. began his anti-papal policy. It remains to consider how far his laws or actions altered the traditional state of affairs.

1. The recognition of the king by the Convocations in 1531 as 'supreme head of the Church and clergy as far as is allowed by the law of Christ,' and the recognition of this title by Parliament in 1534, in the words 'only supreme head on earth of the Church of England,' obviously do not of themselves confer any greater powers upon the

crown than it had been in the habit of exercising. If we may take the explanation which the king gave to the northern Convocation of the meaning of the phrase 'supreme head' as expressing his real intentions at that time, it is quite clear that Henry did not even intend them to confer any new powers. He brings them distinctly within the principle of the supervision of persons and property immemorially exercised by the crown. 'In all those articles,' he writes, 'concerning the persons of priests: concerning this present life only we be called indeed *caput*, and because there is no man above us here we be indeed *supremum caput* . . . as to sacraments and spiritual things they have no head but Christ, so that if ministers behave themselves badly as regards them without scandal they have God as their punisher, but if with scandal, the recognition of it pertains to men.' But however constitutional Henry's views may have been in 1531, the use of the word 'head' was undoubtedly ambiguous, and the temptation to make it include new powers soon proved irresistible.

2. In the act of Supreme Head 1534 a clause was added to the statement of the title of the crown, which very largely increased its administrative powers over the Church, by recognising as belonging to the headship 'the right to visit, redress, and amend all errors and abuses, which by any spiritual jurisdiction ought to be amended. This clearly involved a claim on the part of the crown to exercise spiritual jurisdiction, and not merely to see that the spiritual authorities exercised their jurisdiction, and was a wholly new and unprecedented claim. It was exercised without scruple from 1534 to 1554, but was abolished by the repeal of the statute in the first year of Philip and Mary. On the accession of Elizabeth the power was revived by the 17th clause of the act of Supremacy, but its exercise instead of being left to the initiative of the crown was vested in a court of justice, especially created for that purpose by the 18th clause of the act, and generally known in history as the court of High Commission. This court became very unpopular with the Puritans under the earlier Stuart kings, and was abolished as unconstitutional by the Long Parliament in 1641. This visitatorial and amending power was therefore wholly Parliamentary in its origin and never agreed to by the Church in its corporate capacity, though no doubt it was acquiesced in without question for many years. Eventually it was abolished because of its unconstitutional character before the Reformation in England was fully completed.

3. By the appointment of Thomas Cromwell to be vicegerent of the king in ecclesiastical matters in 1535, a new power wholly

unknown up to that time in English history was claimed by the crown. The letters patent issued by the king clothed Cromwell and his appointees with all the powers of the headship, and expressly authorised them to 'visit in the name of the king all cathedral and collegiate churches, as well as others, correct and punish their presidents and prelates although archbishops or bishops, suspend them from their benefices, sequestrate their revenues, make new statutes for their governance, call synods, direct, confirm, and annul the election of prelates'—in a word, to exercise by delegation from the crown the spiritual jurisdiction formerly exercised by the authority of the Church. This claim on the part of the crown to delegate the powers which it asserted that it possessed over the Church to a vicegerent and his subordinates was never again made. Practically its unconstitutional character was from the first admitted. It only existed for five years and is merely one among the many unconstitutional acts of that period.

4. Although the claim to delegate the exercise of spiritual jurisdiction to whomsoever he would was thus surrendered by the king almost as soon as it was made, both Henry VIII. and the privy council under Edward VI. steadily maintained that the exercise of spiritual jurisdiction was one of the powers comprised in the headship of the crown. They did not claim that the crown had the power of discharging spiritual functions such as those of absolving or consecrating or ordaining. They never asserted that the crown was an appointed channel of spiritual grace in the Church, however exaggerated might have been the language of individuals such as Cranmer or Barlow. But they did claim that the crown was the source of all jurisdiction, spiritual or temporal, and had the right of governing the Church just as it had of governing the State. It was the principle of life, so to speak, of Church government.

This claim was put forward quite clearly in formal documents as well as by public acts between the years 1534 and 1554. Two illustrations will be sufficient to show this. (1). After the royal visitation carried out by Cromwell was finished, a document was issued by the king restoring to the ordinaries the jurisdiction which had been in suspense during the visitation. The document ran thus: 'Forasmuch as all authority for exercising jurisdiction, and all jurisdiction of every kind, as well that which is called ecclesiastical as secular, has emanated in the first place from the king's majesty as from its supreme head and the fountain and source of all magistracies within the kingdom . . . we have determined to commit and depute to you our office, in the manner and form described below, and to license

you to ordain . . . also to collate to benefices, grant probate of wills, and perform all things beyond and besides those which are distinguished as being divinely committed to you in the sacred writings.' (2). In the preamble to the statute passed in 1545 to enable doctors of Civil Law to exercise ecclesiastical jurisdiction, Parliament asserted that the 'Crown hath full power to exercise all manner of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and archbishops and bishops have no manner of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, except by, from, and under the Crown, which is given in Holy Scripture all authority wholly to hear and determine all manner of causes ecclesiastical.' These statements though somewhat startling in their boldness of assertion, at any rate leave no doubt as to the claim of the crown to be the source of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The alteration of services, abolition of ornaments and ceremonies, destruction of altars by royal injunctions and proclamations, the deprivation of bishops by royal commission, fully bore out in practice the claim thus made on paper. For twenty years the independent jurisdiction of the Church exercised by her own officers—the ordinaries—and in her own courts according to her own law, was superseded by the authority of the crown, and the ordinaries became only the officers of the government, in virtue of the powers said to be vested in the crown by the recognition of its supreme headship.

It was for this very reason that Elizabeth deliberately refused to revive the title of supreme head when she came to the throne in 1558, and took particular care to define and limit the constitutional meaning of the ecclesiastical supremacy. For motives of policy as well as from motives of principle she was determined that the ecclesiastical authorities should govern ecclesiastical affairs according to ecclesiastical principles by virtue of their ecclesiastical powers, subject only to the general supervision of the crown. She was especially careful accordingly to make it clear that she claimed no spiritual jurisdiction whatever.

(*a*) She refused the title 'supreme head' because the word 'head' had been taken to imply an original and initiatory power, and took that of governor, which has no such meaning, but rather implies an administrative authority according to established laws.

(*b*) She did not revive the Supreme Head statute of 1534, but left it repealed with the unconstitutional claims which had resulted from it, and defined the supremacy afresh by her own legislation.

(*c*) She put the visitatorial power, as we have seen, under the safeguard of an organised court of justice

(*d*) She explained the supremacy of the crown in her injunctions of

1559 to be 'that which is and was of ancient time due to the imperial crown of this realm—that is, under God to have the sovereignty and rule over all manner of persons born within these her realms of what estate either ecclesiastical or temporal soever they be so as no other foreign power shall or ought to have any superiority over them.' In the Articles she inserted with her own hand the statement that the Church hath authority in controversies of faith. Thus the constitutional character of the supremacy of the crown was expressly vindicated by Elizabeth very much in the same terms as it was explained by Henry VIII. to the northern Convocation in 1531, and does not differ in principle from that exercised by William I. or Edward I., being in its essence the right supervision over the administration of the Church vested in the crown as the champion of the Church, in order that the religious welfare of its subjects may be duly provided for.

Besides the claims which lay hid under the ambiguous title 'head,' there were other definite powers over the Church acknowledged to be in the crown either by express agreement or by accepted legislation.

5. The statute of the Submission of the Clergy, passed in 1534, put into legislative form the agreement made between the king and the Convocations in 1532, as to the making of canons. It provided that the king should have the sole right (1) of assembling the Convocations by his writ; (2) of licensing the making and the promulgation of new canons. The king thus obtained a veto upon all ecclesiastical legislation, and was substantially put in a similar position with regard to Convocation as he was already in with regard to Parliament, *i.e.* he could prevent either body from meeting by not issuing the writs, and he could veto their legislation when they did meet; but the question whether he would be acting constitutionally if he refused the writs or exercised the veto was left open. There was, however, this great difference in his powers. In the making of a statute the king is a legislator—king and Parliament together make the law. In the making of a canon, Convocation is the sole legislator, and makes the canon by its sole authority. The king merely has the right of refusing to enforce it by the authority of the State. He ratifies, confirms, or enforces a canon; he does not make it. These rights of the crown with regard to ecclesiastical legislation were practically only a revival of those which had been exercised by the Norman kings, but allowed to drop into desuetude later.

6. By the same statute the crown was definitely authorised to provide a final court of appeal in ecclesiastical cases by the appointment of commissioners to try each case *ad hoc*. This was purely a

temporary measure to tide over the time until the commission of thirty-two persons appointed to revise the canon law should have completed their labours and constructed a new system of ecclesiastical judicature. But from a succession of accidents the work of the commission never received any official sanction whatever, and in consequence the crown, in virtue of the clause in the statute of 1534, repeatedly acted upon without protest, acquired the right of appointing the members of the final court of appeal in ecclesiastical cases, which was called the court of Delegates. But in 1833 Parliament, without consulting the Church in any way, abolished the court of Delegates, and transferred their powers to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and it is a matter of considerable doubt whether the right to make such a change, however well-intentioned, can be said to be included in the supremacy of the crown, especially when the haphazard way in which the right grew up is considered.

When, therefore, we compare the theory and practice of the royal supremacy as it emerged from the troubles and controversies of the Reformation period, with its previous history in the Middle Ages, we find that the chief change which had occurred was that of greater definition. Much that had been vague in assertion and spasmodic in action before had now become orderly and defined.

(1) Throughout the history of the English Church, from the coming of the Normans, the ecclesiastical supremacy of the crown had been mainly an assertion of national self-government against the encroachments of the pope as a foreign power, which claimed to have rights by virtue of its own prerogative over Englishmen. But the details of that national self-government and its precise extent had been always a matter of bargain and arrangement between the crown and the pope. At the Reformation entire national self-government was asserted, and the supremacy of the crown became the means whereby the nation resisted all claims of interference on the part of the pope. Arrangements as to hearing appeals, sanctioning appointments, exercising patronage, levying taxation, which had occupied such a prominent place in the ecclesiastical history of the Middle Ages, ceased to have any validity. The pope became in the eyes of the nation a foreign power, which, like Spain, was a national enemy desirous of conquering England; and the royal supremacy became the test by which friend could be told from foe. The oath to the supremacy was not so much an acknowledgment of kingly power as an assertion of loyal patriotism. At the root of it lay the old national feeling expressing itself in consequence of the altered circumstances in an intensified and more definite form.

(2) Closely connected with the assertion of national resistance to foreign claims was the assertion of royal authority over subjects, which found strong expression in royal policy such as that of William I., Henry I., and Edward I., and in royal legislation such as that of Henry II. and Edward I. Here again the Reformation defined that authority more clearly. It gave an untrammelled instead of a predominant power of appointment to archbishoprics and bishoprics, a definite instead of a vague veto on ecclesiastical legislation, a clear right to appoint the members of the court of Delegates instead of an unenforceable right to limit appeals, an acknowledged right to the allegiance of all its subjects both as Churchmen and as citizens, instead of an allegiance divided in conscience though not in law. These definitions no doubt considerably increased the effective authority of the crown, but they introduced no new principle and no new power. They only made clear and workable what before had been vague and fluctuating.

(3) For twenty years the Reformation introduced a new principle and gave the crown a new power by the interpretation put upon the title 'supreme head' by Henry VIII. and the council under Edward VI. The claims to administer the affairs of the Church, to be the chief ordinary of the Church, and to be the source of jurisdiction in the Church, were unknown to the law and the constitution in the Middle Ages, and were given up by Mary and never again claimed, though part of the authority which was connected with them lasted on till 1641. By the end of the Reformation in 1662 all traces of them had vanished both from theory and practice. Practically, as an active force in English affairs, they lasted only from 1534 to 1554, and thus synchronise with the period in English history when the constitution was in abeyance and the authority of the crown absolute. No one would think of deriving any precedent in constitutional history from the reigns of Henry VIII. or Edward VI., either as regards the affairs of the Church or of the State.

(4) The Reformation further introduced the phrase 'supreme governor' into the title of the crown. It is difficult to say with any authority exactly what that title might be held constitutionally to imply, as it has never been a subject of exhaustive argument or decision. Whether it implies anything beyond the 'supremacy over all persons ecclesiastical as well as civil,' constantly recognised during the Middle Ages, may be doubted. But whatever powers it does include it is pretty clear that they do not extend to the powers claimed by the crown under the title 'supreme head,' for in that case there would have been no meaning in surrendering the one title and taking the other. Neither

does it imply the right to override the working of ecclesiastical laws, for the attempt which was made by James II. to suspend by his royal authority alone the working of the laws against the Roman Catholics was declared to be unconstitutional in the Bill of Rights. Neither does it include the power to constitute by royal authority alone an ecclesiastical court, for the erection of a High Commission court by James II. in virtue of the supremacy was also declared unconstitutional. From these instances it would seem as if the title should be considered as limited by ancient precedents, and not intended to convey any new powers at all.

NOTE E

ENGLISH ORDERS

As the majority of the English episcopate since the time of Elizabeth derive their orders through archbishop Parker, great efforts have been made on the part of Roman Catholic controversialists to show that the consecration of archbishop Parker in 1559 was itself invalid, and that consequently not being a true bishop himself he could not transmit the succession to others.

The argument against the validity of English Orders has taken different forms at different times.

1. *The Nag's Head Story.*— In 1604 a story was set in motion that all the consecration which Parker received was that, at a meeting of bishops-elect at the Nag's Head tavern in Cheapside, Scory, pretended bishop of Chichester, placed a Bible upon the head of each in turn, saying to him as he did so, 'Take thou authority to preach the word of God sincerely.' This ridiculous story is, of course, in flat opposition to the evidence of the consecration at Lambeth chapel by Barlow, Hodgkin, Scory and Coverdale, contained in the Lambeth register and in a contemporary copy of that part of the record which concerns the consecration preserved in the library of Corpus Christi College at Cambridge, besides many other contemporary notices, and it has long been given up by candid Roman Catholic historians. It was, however, seriously maintained during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and is still extensively believed among the uneducated.

2. *The attack upon Barlow.*—Since 1616, when it was first noticed, the fact that no record exists of the consecration of Barlow who presided at the consecration of Parker has been used to prove that Barlow

was never consecrated at all, and was therefore no true bishop. It is sought to strengthen this contention by showing that Barlow himself attached little weight to consecration, and that it is difficult to assign a day for the ceremony, knowing what we do of Barlow's movements. To this it may be replied (1) that, while speaking generally, the survival of a particular historical record is a matter of accident, and the loss of a document is neither exceptional nor surprising, in a case where Cranmer's register is concerned it is even less surprising; for, like Warham's before it, and Pole's after, it is very carelessly kept, and in fact consists only of a number of promiscuous documents bound together and not even in their proper order; and a quarter of the records which ought to be found here, including those of the consecrations of undisputed bishops—Gardiner of Winchester among them—are wanting. It is true that in Barlow's case the usual compensating evidence—that, namely, of the register of his own diocese of S. David's—is also wanting; but here again it is not that a particular entry is missing in an otherwise complete record, but that the whole register, if it ever existed, has perished. (2) That the private opinions of Barlow, and the difficulty of assigning a probable day for the ceremony (if admitted) can weigh as nothing against the facts, that both Cranmer and Barlow publicly accepted the orthodox statements on the subject of orders which were put forth authoritatively; in other words, that they acted officially on the principles of the Church, and not on the opinions which they may have held at particular moments in a period of unsettlement; that if Cranmer had omitted to consecrate Barlow within twenty days of his receiving the official notice of his election, he would have rendered himself and his officials liable to the penalties of *præmunire* under the Act 25 Henry VIII. c. 20; that Barlow acted as bishop of three successive sees within the years 1536-1569, sitting and voting in the Upper House of Convocation, and co-operating in the consecration of other bishops, without any objection being taken against him; and that during part of that time he was engaged in a lawsuit with his chapter at S. David's, which he must have lost if it could have been proved that he was never consecrated, whereas the point was not even suggested. That a man could have successfully defied the law both of Church and State for so many years, surrounded as he was by keen and interested enemies, and been accepted as a bishop in all respects by all parties without question, is incredible. Nor was any doubt raised, so far as is known, till eighty years after his consecration and forty-eight years after his death. But even if the story were true, it would make no difference to the validity of Parker's orders; for there is clear evidence that all four

bishops pronounced the words of consecration and laid their hands upon his head.

3. *The sufficiency of the Ordinal.*—As the historical arguments against the validity of English orders have proved so weak, greater stress has been laid upon theological arguments. Putting aside certain objections which are in fact founded only on the legal or civil status of the Ordinal at the moment of Parker's consecration, and such as could not affect the validity of the order conferred—and putting aside also objections founded on the fact that the English Ordinal was in a sense a new one, a fact which, apart from theological defects, could no more affect validity than could legal objections—it has been urged (1) that until 1662 the *form* of episcopal consecration, 'Take the Holy Ghost, was invalid in that it contained no explicit statement as to what order was being conferred. To this it is more than sufficient to reply that the form in question was taken directly from the Latin Pontifical, where it is open to the same criticism; and that in fact its intention is determined both by the context—and the intention of the Latin formula is not otherwise determined—and by the quotation from S. Paul (2 Tim. i. 6) which was added in the English book and fixes it as referring to the order to which S. Timothy was consecrated, viz. the episcopate. (2) That whereas the episcopate can only be conferred on one who is already a priest, the English Church has no true priests, since the *matter* of the ordination of priests is deficient in our Ordinal in that it does not include 'the porrection of the instruments,' *i.e.* the delivery to the ordinand of a paten with a host, and a chalice with wine and water. This does not affect Parker's consecration, since he was ordained priest by the rite of the Latin Pontifical; but, it is urged, it has invalidated subsequent ordinations and consecrations. But, in the first place, it is not the case that the priesthood is a necessary preliminary to a valid episcopate; and secondly, the porrection of the instruments is no part of the matter of ordination. It was only introduced into western Ordinals in the eleventh century, and it is not found in Eastern rites. Such an objection, therefore, would invalidate all the orders of the Church for a thousand years, and those of the East for all time. (3) Of recent years another objection to the sufficiency of the Ordinal has been much pressed. It is said that the English Church denies the Eucharistic Sacrifice, and that the Ordinal contains nothing to confer the power of sacrifice upon candidates for the priesthood. To this it may be replied (*a*) that, while it is not admitted that the Church has denied the Eucharistic Sacrifice, yet even if she had, this would not affect the validity of her orders, since

the principle has been often enough asserted even by the Roman Church, that heresy itself on the part of the minister of a sacrament, even though it relate to the substance of the sacrament itself, does not affect the validity of its administration. The sacraments express and effect the will of the Holy Ghost, and do not depend upon men's conception of them; (*b*) that ordination is the consecration of a person to an office or an order, therefore to all the functions which, according to the will and institution of our Lord, appertain to it, and it is not necessary to specify one or any of those functions; (*c*) that early Ordinals, and in fact the original, and therefore only essential parts of the Roman Ordinal itself, contain nothing explicitly conferring the power of sacrifice; (*d*) that the English Ordinal is so far more explicit than the early rites that it directs the bishop to say to the ordinand, 'Be thou a faithful dispenser . . . of His holy sacraments,' and 'Take thou authority . . . to minister the holy sacraments'; and the Eucharistic Sacrifice is not something superadded to the sacrament of the Eucharist, but an aspect of it.

(4) *The doctrine of Intention.*—A further objection sometimes taken to the validity of Parker's consecration is that, inasmuch as Barlow and the other consecrating bishops did not believe that a validly consecrated episcopate was of the essence of the Church, they could not have had the intention to make a true bishop, and that accordingly a true bishop was not made. Omitting the question as to whether, in fact, Barlow and his colleagues held the opinion so attributed to them; omitting also the further question as to whether, if they did hold it, it necessarily vitiated their intention, it is sufficient to say that this argument depends entirely for its force upon a doctrine held by some modern Roman Catholic theologians, but unknown to earlier times, that the validity of a sacrament itself depends upon the personal intention of the administrator of the sacrament. If this is maintained in strictness it takes away all certainty as to the validity of every sacrament, as it is impossible to say what the intention of the administrator in any given instance may be, and it deals a terrible blow at orders of the Roman Church which have been derived from pagan bishops of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, or atheist bishops of the revolutionary period, like M. de Talleyrand. But the doctrine of Intention, as commonly held and as stated by the council of Trent, does not go this length. It merely asserts that in order that a sacrament may be validly administered, it is necessary that the administrator should have 'the general intention of doing what the Church does': in other words, that, in the execution of the acts prescribed by the Church, he should act seriously as a minister of the Church.

Hence it is irrelevant to inquire into the private opinions of the minister. As a minister he is not a mere individual, and his actions are not his own but the Church's so long as he acts as the Church directs, and they express and effect not his intentions but those of the Church. And the intention of the Church of England—*i.e.* what she means by the acts which she prescribes—is clear from the preface to the Ordinal, where it is asserted that the Church of England intends to 'continue' the orders which 'have been in Christ's Church from the Apostle's time'; in other words, she intends by the rites contained in the Ordinal to make bishops, priests, and deacons with the same character and powers as bishops, priests, and deacons have had in the Church at large from the beginning. The fact is that, until quite recent years, theologians of the Roman Church abroad were extremely ignorant about the Church of England and her rites. They were accustomed to confuse English Churchmen with continental Protestants, and look upon the English Church as a sort of Erastian offshoot of Lutheranism. Consequently such questions as those of English Orders fell into the hands of English Roman Catholics who were actually engaged in the work of proselytism, and naturally treated the subject from the point of view of controversy, rather than of history, or of theology, or of liturgiology. Since, however, the Roman Catholic historian Lingard, in the interests of historical truth, gave the death-blow to the Nag's Head story and the denial of Barlow's consecration, a new spirit has grown up among students; and in quite recent years a school has formed itself chiefly in France, including the distinguished names of the Abbé Duchesne, one of the most eminent of living ecclesiastical historians, and Monsignor Gasparri, the Professor of Canon Law at Paris, which, approaching the subject purely from the point of view of students, has arrived at the conclusion that the validity of English Orders cannot be denied. It is probable, therefore, that the next few years will see a much more impartial and intelligent study of the Church of England on the part of foreign ecclesiastics than has been customary since the Reformation.

CHAPTER XV

THE GROWTH OF PURITANISM

A.D. 1559-1604

THE first ten years of the reign of Elizabeth were years of infinite peril for both Church and State in England. Had France and Spain and the pope once agreed to sink for a time their mutual rivalries in order to crush the English queen, nothing could have saved England from conquest and Elizabeth from destruction. Even as things were, she owed her safety more to the inveterate procrastination of Philip II. than to the success of her own diplomacy. Every year, nay, every month, which passed saw her stronger in the loyalty of her subjects and her position more assured in the councils of Europe. While she was weak and friendless, Philip could not make up his mind to strike. By the time that he made up his mind to strike, she had grown too strong to be conquered. Patriotism and loyalty are plants which flourish well in the genial warmth of the sun of success, and England repaid Elizabeth for the boldness and skill with which she had steered her course by the passionate devotion of a united people, against which foreign aggression was powerless.

Difficulties of Elizabeth, 1559-1569.

By mingled good luck and good management, Elizabeth succeeded in warding off all outward attacks upon her government for ten years. During that time Englishmen had learned to trust her in all matters of civil government, and loyally followed where she led the way. It was not so with matters of religion. While loyalty to her person and her throne was fast rising to enthusiasm,

Religious principles of the leading clergy.

opposition to her ecclesiastical system on the part of a section of the nation was slowly hardening into something like hate. The reasons are not far to seek. With the exception of Parker and a few of the older bishops, the English episcopate accepted the Prayer-book, not for what it was, but for what they hoped to make it. Grindal and Sandys and Parkhurst and Cox and their colleagues had come back from their exile at Zürich or Frankfort or Geneva, adherents of the doctrines of Calvin and Bullinger. They wished to see them taught and practised in England; and they merely tolerated the Prayer-book, with its Catholic teaching and ceremonies for the time, out of consideration for the scruples of the queen, until an opportunity should offer itself for altering it. When such were the principles of the majority of the bishops, it was not wonderful that the clergy whom they ordained held the same opinions. As the supporters of the Reformation under Henry VIII. had been scattered to the winds, there was no source from which candidates for ordination could come except from among those who had thrown in their lot with the policy of Edward VI. Even if a student whose mind was as yet unaffected by the religious controversies wished to apply himself to the study of theology at Oxford or Cambridge, he would have found no text-book from which to work. The text-books of the Middle Ages—S. Thomas, Peter Lombard, Duns Scotus and their brethren—had long ago been committed to the flames. English theology, as we now know it in Hooker and Andrewes and Jeremy Taylor, was not yet written. What wonder was it when all was vague and indeterminate, when learning was depressed and libraries destroyed, that men eagerly turned to the one Protestant treatise which contained a logical and simple system of theology, and that the Institutes of Calvin became the acknowledged text-book of the English universities, the mould in which the religious opinions of the English clergy for half a century were formed.[1]

[1] The influence of Calvin upon theological teaching was much greater at Cambridge than at Oxford, but it had become dominant at the latter university by the middle of the queen's reign.

Thus there grew up, during the larger part of the reign of Elizabeth, an important and increasing party among the clergy and the laity which derived its religious beliefs from sources opposed to the Church. Men trained under the influence of the Institutes of Calvin believed in the utter corruption of human nature, derived the beginning of Christian life from the special election of some by God instead of from the grace offered to all in Baptism, repudiated the doctrine of the Real Presence of our Lord in the Holy Eucharist, denied that salvation was offered to all mankind through the sacrifice of the Cross, substituted the congregation of the elect for the visible Church of Christ, and were prepared to hand over the vast majority of the human race to everlasting damnation, without any fault of their own, by the terrible doctrine of reprobation. It is true that men were better than their creed, and that this travesty of Christianity never exercised the same imperious sway over Englishmen as it did for so long over the Swiss and the Scots. Still it must not be forgotten that as late as the year 1595 articles were drawn up at Lambeth, under the presidency of archbishop Whitgift, which asserted that God has from everlasting predestinated some people to life, and some He has reprobated to death, and that it is not in the power of every man to be saved. It was the queen, and not the bishops, who preserved the Church of England from all complicity with such statements, and there is no reason to think that if the Lambeth articles had been imposed by authority they would have met with any serious opposition.

Predominant influence of the doctrines of Calvin.

Thus, as the older race of clergy who had been ordained in the time of Henry VIII. died out, their places were filled by men who had lost the traditions of the Catholic Church, were ignorant of her theology, and did not understand the principles of her worship. The well-established customs regulating the performance of divine service, which the revisers of the Prayer-book had taken for granted, had already dropped out of sight. The universities and the chief benefices in the large towns were filled with men who recognised in the teaching of Calvin the great

religious influence of their lives. The laity, taught by them, and embittered by the national struggle with Spain, opposed themselves to everything which was connected in their minds with Rome, and showed no wish to retain the system of the Church. Deterioration in public worship quickly set in. Churches were neglected, chancels closed, the Holy Table profaned by common use, the tradition of common worship lost. Religion became subjective and individualistic. The Holy Eucharist ceased to be the great service of the week, and was only celebrated in many parishes but three times in the year.

The Vestiarian controversy.

Naturally, men who thus mistook the teaching of Calvin for the teaching of Christ found it difficult to sit down quietly under the benignant rule of the Church. They scorned the mildness of her doctrine, they disliked the episcopal form of her discipline, they scented superstition in every rite and every ceremony. Even the ordinary dress of the clergy seemed to them to be too akin to popery to be tolerable. All who had been in exile during the reign of Mary, including those who had become bishops, were scandalised at the retention of the crucifix in the queen's chapel and the continued use of the cope. Most of them, including Grindal, Sandys, Parkhurst, and Jewel, objected to the wearing of any distinctive clerical dress at all, in church or out of church, and looked upon the square cap and long gown generally in use among the clergy as dregs of popery which still contaminated the English ecclesiastical system. When raised to the episcopate they endeavoured to procure their abolition, but on finding the queen deaf to their protests they consented to wear the dresses themselves, and enforce their use upon others, contrary to their own wishes, rather than to surrender the government of the Church of England into the hands of the reactionary party by resigning their posts.

This decision received the warm approbation of Bullinger and Peter Martyr and their other friends at Zürich. But some more uncompromising spirits, led by Sampson, the dean of Christ Church, and Humphrey, President of Magdalen College, Oxford, looked upon such conduct as little less than a

betrayal of the gospel and a step back towards popery. They utterly refused to wear any distinctive dress at all. Supported by Beza, the successor of Calvin at Geneva, they remonstrated with Bullinger for his pusillanimous advice, and defied Elizabeth and her bishops to do their worst. Thus, from the very first year of Elizabeth's reign there appeared a division among the ranks of the reformers themselves. United in doctrine they differed on questions of ceremonial. Some of them accepted the organisation of the Church as a convenient form of government without believing in its necessity, and loyally obeyed the Prayer-book as the standard of worship imposed by lawful authority to which they had no conscientious objection. These soon formed the bulk of the Anglican party. Others, who from their desire for a more simple service and ritual gradually acquired the name of Puritans, objected on conscientious grounds to much that was contained in the Prayer-book, especially to the use of vestments, the wearing of a distinctive dress by the clergy, the practice of kneeling at the reception of Communion, and the use of the sign of the cross in baptism and of the ring in marriage. They preferred a presbyterian to an episcopal form of organisation, and resented episcopal interference, without, however, attacking episcopacy as an institution.

The Puritans.

Gradually as time went on divisions began to show themselves among the Puritans. Part of their body, under the pressure of authority, professed themselves willing to acquiesce in the discipline of the Church, much as they disliked it, and 'conformed,' as the phrase went, to the demands of the government. The more advanced, like Sampson, sternly refused to obey, and were prepared to suffer all the penalties of the law rather than make a compromise with their consciences. But neither conforming nor nonconforming Puritan ever thought for one moment of leaving the Church because he objected to its doctrine or its discipline. Such ideas were altogether foreign to the sixteenth century. We in the nineteenth century, who have become accustomed to the permanence of religious division, easily enough find a relief for our

Conforming and nonconforming Puritans.

religious peculiarities in the foundation of new sects. In the sixteenth century the very idea of the permanence of religious division in a country would have seemed a confession of national and spiritual weakness too intolerable to be entertained for a moment. To be a member of a sect within the nation was the very last thing that Puritan or Anglican desired to be. Ascendancy, not toleration, was the aim and policy of all alike. To the Anglican the first and plainest of duties was to maintain the religious solidarity of the nation by enforcing upon all the ecclesiastical system which it had adopted. No less binding appeared the obligation on the Puritan of purging that ecclesiastical system of superstition, and moulding it according to his own view of the gospel. The problem of religious division presented itself for the first time to Englishmen. It was only natural that they should endeavour to meet it by crushing it out of existence.

So began the long war between the Church of England and Puritanism—a war not for toleration, but for ascendancy, a war on each side to crush the other out of existence in the national Church. On the side of the Church were the traditions of historical Christianity, the framework of Catholic order and discipline, a Prayer-book of Catholic doctrine and ceremonial, and the strong support of the crown and government. On the side of Puritanism was the definite, logical, concentrated, Calvinistic system of doctrine on which it rested, the lofty and uncompromising, if somewhat hard character which Calvinism tended to produce, and the strong love of personal and national liberty which quickly associated itself with the Parliamentary opposition to misgovernment, and turned the members of a sect into the champions of the nation.

Opposition of Puritanism to the Church.

Elizabeth had not been long on the throne before the difference of religious principle among her subjects forced itself upon her attention. In September 1560 she issued a proclamation to restrain the defacing of carved monuments and stained glass windows. In the January of the next year she directed the court of High Commission to remedy the negligence and irreverence with which the churches were kept

Want of order in the Church.

and the sacraments administered. In a royal progress through the eastern counties in the summer of the year she was much scandalised at the 'slender ministers and nakedness of religion' which she found. It would seem as if nearly all those who obtained benefices in the early days of Elizabeth cared too little for the Church or her worship to keep the buildings clean or the services orderly. In 1564 Cecil, the queen's chief adviser, drew up a report which shows clearly enough the anarchy which reigned. 'Some,' he says, 'say the service and prayers in the chancel, others in the body of the church; some say in a surplice, others without a surplice. In some places the table standeth altarwise, distant from the wall a yard, in others in the middle of the chancel, north and south; in some places the table hath a carpet, in others it hath not. Administration of the Communion is done by some with surplice and cap, some with surplice alone, others with none; some receive kneeling, others standing, others sitting; some baptize in a font, some in a basin; some sign with the sign of the cross, others sign not; some wear a square cap, some a round cap, some a cap with a button, some a hat.' The queen and archbishop Parker not unnaturally considered such wilful disobedience to the rubrics to go far beyond a reasonable liberty in ceremonial. But realising the impossibility of inducing the Puritan bishops to enforce the rubrics in their entirety, the archbishop determined to pursue a policy of conciliation, and only to lay down for the present the minimum of observance to which obedience would be exacted. By the book of Advertisements issued by Parker in 1566, on his own authority but with the approval of the queen, the use of the Eucharistic vestments, of the cope in parish churches, and of the cross in baptism and the ring in marriage were tacitly laid on one side. But the use of the surplice in all ministrations in parish churches, the wearing of a cope in cathedral and collegiate churches at the celebration of the Eucharist, the posture of kneeling at the reception of Communion, the vesting of the Holy Table with a proper covering, the use of the font alone for

Attempt to enforce a minimum of observance by the Advertisements, 1566.

baptism, and the wearing by the clergy of a distinctive dress out of church, were strictly enjoined by ecclesiastical penalties. Even this minimum of observance proved too great a burden for the consciences of many of the Puritans. Thirty-seven clergy in the diocese of London suffered deprivation rather than obey, and began to hold meetings of their own, and even to celebrate the Eucharist in their own houses. In 1567 nearly a hundred men and women were seized at Plumber's Hall by the sheriffs of London, and punished for holding an illegal religious meeting under the pretence of a wedding.

Had Parker merely had to deal with those whose consciences forbade them to conform to the requirements of the Advertisements he would have had no great difficulty in maintaining the discipline of the Church. It was a very different matter when the cause for which the nonconformists suffered was embraced by a large proportion of English churchmen, and was not without supporters even among the courtiers and the bishops. Leicester, the queen's all-powerful favourite, was the acknowledged patron of the Puritans. Pilkington, bishop of Durham, and Parkhurst, bishop of Norwich, openly refused to enforce the Advertisements until they were made to do so by the queen. In 1563 a petition for the abolition of practices disliked by the Puritans was only lost in the Lower House of Convocation by a majority of one. In 1571 and 1572 proposals were made in the House of Commons to alter the Prayer-book in order to meet the views of the Puritans. They were only stopped by the direct command of the queen to the House not to discuss any bills concerning religion which had not received the approval of the Convocations. Conscious of the strength of their influence at Court and in Parliament the Puritans were irritated rather than intimidated by the efforts to force them to conform. The bolder spirits amongst them quitted the purely defensive position of nonconformity which they had taken up, and carried the war into the enemy's country by an attack upon episcopacy itself. In 1572 appeared a volume entitled the *First and Second Admonitions*, written under the direction of

Strength of the Puritan feeling.

Attack on episcopacy by the Puritans, 1572.

Thomas Cartwright, formerly Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, which strongly attacked the government of the Church by bishops and advocated the presbyterian system of discipline established by Calvin at Geneva.[1]

In 1580 Cartwright and Travers followed this up by publishing the book of Discipline, in which the presbyterian system was adapted to the special circumstances of the Church of England. Two years later it was established in full working order. Recognising the difficulty of procuring the formal abolition of episcopacy, the authors conceived the idea of erecting under its shadow a presbyterian system which should eviscerate it of all authority. While bishops were to remain clothed by law with powers of government over the Church, these powers were really to be exercised by voluntary associations called '*classes*' and synods. The scheme was an ingenious one. A *classis*, or board of Puritan clergy, was formed in each of the districts into which the country was divided, which should be the unit of Church government and the source of spiritual authority instead of the bishop. The ceremonial to be adopted in church, the dress to be worn out of church, the way in which the service should be conducted, were all to be regulated according to the 'counsels' of the *classis*, regardless of ecclesiastical law or episcopal admonition. Candidates for ordination were to submit their qualifications for the ministry to the judgment of the *classis*, and derive their spiritual authority from the 'call' of the *classis* instead of the ordination and license of the bishop. But since, in the eyes of the law, episcopal ordination and commission were necessary for the due discharge of ministerial functions[2] and

Their attempt to establish a presbyterian system, 1580.

[1] The temper of some of the leading Puritans at this time may be gathered from the thesis maintained by Chark, formerly fellow of Peterhouse, before the university of Cambridge in 1572. His proposition ran thus: 'Isti status episcopatus, archiepiscopatus, metropolitanatus, patriarchatus, denique papatus a Satana in ecclesiam introducti sunt.'

[2] It is true that in the reigns of Edward VI. and Elizabeth some persons who had not received episcopal ordination were appointed to benefices and other offices involving the discharge of spiritual functions, but it can hardly be doubted that all such appointments were legally irregular and arose from the confusion of the times. The possibility of their recurrence was finally stopped in 1662.

the holding of benefices, the Puritan candidate who had received his 'call' from the *classis* was permitted to procure ordination from the bishop as a ceremony required by law to remedy the defect in his legal status, but having in itself no spiritual significance. Further organisation provided for the yearly meeting of a general assembly in London representative of all the *classes*, and for the formation in parishes of a consistory or financial board which should collect and dispense the offerings of the faithful instead of the rector and churchwardens.

Thus a complete system of Church government and finance was to be established which should supersede without abolishing the machinery provided by the Church. That the two systems could have existed for long side by side was obviously impossible. It was hoped that if the spiritual authority over the consciences of the clergy could be transferred from the bishops to the *classis*, the Church system thus undermined from below would quickly fall as a prey to its enemies. In May, 1582, the experiment was begun at Cuckfield in Sussex, and it soon spread over the midland counties. Where *classes* were formed the Prayer-book was practically superseded. The Puritan ministers, acting on the advice of the *classes*, openly refused to have anything to do with it. They hired other persons to read the service, and themselves came into church and preached the sermon when the obligatory reading of the prayers was finished.

The question between the Church and the Puritans had thus evidently far outgrown the limits of the dispute about dresses and ceremonies. Cartwright and his friends who were concerned with the book of Discipline aimed not at the reform but at the abolition of the Church of England. All possibility of retaining both Anglicans and the advanced Puritans in the same religious organisation had passed away. No longer was it possible to persuade the logical and conscientious Calvinist to accommodate himself to episcopal government and Catholic services. From the first this had been clear enough to any one who had eyes to see. Calvinism and episcopacy are incompatible, and have

Incompatibility of Calvinistic Puritanism and the Church.

proved incompatible wherever the two systems have been brought into contact. In the very nature of things it could not be otherwise, for Calvinism in its complete development is quite as much a system of Church government as it is a body of theological doctrine, and wherever it has been able to develop its own principles freely it has at once got rid of the government and denied the spiritual powers of the episcopate. In all but a few cases it has discarded the very name. Titular bishops have occasionally existed among Calvinistic communities, but real bishops never. Calvinism postulates a presbyterian form of Church government just as certainly as the Catholic Church postulates episcopacy. As long as the Church of England maintained her claim to be part of the Catholic Church, to profess Catholic doctrine both in creeds and sacraments, to use reformed Catholic services, to base her theology on the teaching of the primitive and undivided Church, to be 'founded in the estate of Prelacy,' it was impossible for her to admit within her pale a system of government which was absolutely opposed to that unquestionably adopted by the Catholic Church for at least fourteen centuries. In 1582, as afterwards in 1662, the question before the rulers of Church and State was not whether some changes in ceremonial and discipline could be devised, which, without interfering with the structure and historical claims of the Church, might give relief to tender consciences. It was whether those historical claims themselves should be surrendered, the structure itself destroyed, and a new religious body created. Flushed with their success in the neighbouring countries of Holland and Scotland, conscious that Englishmen were rapidly getting more and more Calvinistic in their religious beliefs, irritated by the attempts of the bishops, half-hearted though they were, to enforce a minimum of ceremonial uniformity by the Advertisements, the advanced Puritans thought that the time had come to declare open war upon what remained of Catholicism in England. All that was traditional and Catholic seemed to them to be popish. They rejected the required ceremonial, they refused to read the services of the Prayer-book because both

seemed to them to breath the spirit of popery. They tried to supersede episcopal by presbyterian government, they poured the venom of their wrath, in the Martin Marprelate tracts, upon episcopacy itself in 1588, because they instinctively felt that Catholicism and episcopacy were bound up together. *Ubi episcopus ibi ecclesia.*

Other circumstances combined to make this forward movement on the part of the Puritans more dangerous than it would otherwise have been. In her dread of permitting anything which might grow into schismatical worship, Elizabeth had compelled the bishops in 1577 to suppress what to many, perhaps to most, of those who took part in them were nothing more than devotional meetings for the improvement of spiritual life. These 'exercises' or 'prophesyings,' as they were called, took different forms in different places. In some they were simply meetings of the clergy and laity of a district, held on a week-day, at which some portion of Scripture was read and explained by the clergy with the object of a better intellectual and devotional appreciation of the passage. But in some places they seem also to have been used for purposes of public as well as personal discipline. At Northampton there was a weekly meeting, held under the joint presidency of the mayor and the preacher, at which, after the Scripture reading was finished, reports on oath were made by men appointed for the purpose of gross sins committed during the week by townspeople, and their evil life corrected accordingly. Once a quarter the ministers of the whole shire met at the town and privately conferred among themselves of their manners and lives. Some of the bishops, looking only at the spiritual side of these exercises, gave them their hearty approval and issued regulations for their conduct. But Elizabeth, who was always suspicious of all private meetings, and especially disliked anything which seemed to stir up inconvenient religious enthusiasm, determined to put them down. Grindal, who had succeeded Parker as archbishop of Canterbury in 1575, and strongly approved of the prophesyings, remonstrated with Elizabeth for her decision in language which

Suppression of the prophesyings, 1577.

did more credit to his conscience than to his wisdom, and was driven into compulsory retirement for the rest of his active life by the angry queen. After this high-handed proceeding there were no more protests, and the prophesyings were suppressed all over the country. It is easy to see that there was a real danger that in troublous days meetings such as these might be used for the purposes of political or religious fanaticism; but it was, to say the least of it, unfortunate that the queen should have found it necessary to discourage spiritual zeal at the same time that she was trying to enforce ceremonial uniformity.

The suppression of the prophesyings merely increased the bitterness of feeling cherished by the Puritans against episcopal government. The attack upon England by Spain and the pope fanned the flame of Protestantism to a white heat. For the first ten years of Elizabeth's reign, those of her subjects who found themselves unable in conscience again to withdraw from the pope the pledge of spiritual allegiance which they had so lately renewed under Mary, were treated by the wisdom of the queen with a kindly toleration. She was careful to secure her government from all danger by obtaining from Parliament statutory powers which she could enforce against Roman Catholics if she found it necessary. By the combined effect of the two statutes of supremacy passed in 1559 and 1562, the lives of her Roman Catholic subjects were placed at her mercy. At any moment she could strike, did she so please, and force all who attended mass to take the oath of supremacy at the peril of their lives. But the act was intended merely as a safeguard, and Cecil received special instructions not to enforce it. If foreign aggression could be warded off and the Church of England allowed free scope for her energies, Elizabeth did not doubt that within a generation or two Roman Catholics would be absorbed into the ranks of the national Church by the simple operation of natural laws.

Condition of the Roman Catholics, 1559-1569.

Unfortunately, it was impossible for England to escape entanglement in the politics of Europe. Foreign aggression could not be

avoided. The counter-reformation was every day making its influence more felt. The Roman Church, purified from much moral abuse and administrative laxity by the council of Trent, inspired by the society of Jesus with a missionary enthusiasm which feared no obstacles and recognised no defeat, was setting itself to win back revolted Europe to its standard by the combined efforts of politics and religion. Philip II. was attempting to found a universal empire over the souls and bodies of men through the fires of the Spanish inquisition, and the prowess of the Spanish infantry. France, under the leadership of the house of Guise, forgot for a time its ancient rivalry, and, hand in hand with Philip and the pope, strove to establish the ascendancy of the Roman Catholic interest in Europe. In whatever direction this common policy was pushed, England and Elizabeth were found barring the way to success by the operation of laws which they could neither control nor avoid. In distant America, whence Philip drew the sinews of war for his European schemes, English seamen—half traders, half pirates—disputed with the Spaniards for the possession of their most cherished monopoly. Nearer at home, the trade interests of England fostered a close alliance with the sturdy burghers of the Netherlands, whose religion and liberties Philip was determined to crush. The unhappy career of Mary of Scotland, which led to her English prison in 1568, brought Elizabeth into sharp antagonism to the dynastic ambitions of the family of Guise. At Rome it was felt that the time for negotiations had passed away. There was no prospect of the political and religious system of Elizabeth falling into ruin by disruption at home. On the contrary, each day as it passed left it more secure than ever. A supreme effort was needed if the haughty island power was to be crushed, which was slowly gathering into its hands all the threads of the opposition to Spain and the papacy.

Effect of foreign complications.

It was at this moment that Pius V. ascended the papal throne. His soul was filled with an insatiable longing for the conversion of heretics and the triumph of the Church of Rome. His indomitable will brooked no opposition. His lofty enthusiasm scorned

the timid pleadings of diplomacy. Regarding Elizabeth as the most deadly enemy of the truth, and the people of England as the most unfortunate victims of tyranny and deceit, he determined to enlist in his cause the whole religious and political forces of the counter-reformation, and to direct them against the English queen. In 1568 a seminary was founded at Douai by cardinal Allen for the training of missionaries for the conversion of England. In 1569 the pope drew up a bull of excommunication and deposition against Elizabeth, and gave his support to the rebellion of the northern earls against the queen in that year. In 1570 he published the bull, and called upon France and Spain to carry it out. From that moment until the defeat of the Spanish armada in 1588, there was war, more or less overt, between England and the counter-reformation. On the one side was the unconquerable patriotism of Englishmen, on the other the combined forces of political ambition and religious enthusiasm.

The bull of deposition, 1570.

From 1574 began to flow into England from Douai the stream of single-hearted missionaries eager for the conversion of souls. In 1580 Gregory XIII. fitted out at his own expense and sent to Ireland an expedition to assist the Irish in asserting their independence. In 1581 the society of Jesus entered into the lists and sent a Jesuit mission to England, some of the members of which certainly took part in conspiracies to place Mary of Scotland on the English throne, and to assassinate the queen. Roman Catholic laymen and Roman Catholic priests were implicated in the plots of Ridolphi in 1572, and Babington in 1586, which undoubtedly contemplated the murder of the queen. The death of Mary, which was the answer made by Elizabeth to such schemes, brought matters to a climax. To the pope and Philip the armada of 1588 was a crusade, to Elizabeth and all her subjects, irrespective of creed, it was an act of sheer aggression. Its defeat was at once the victory of patriotism, and the end of the religious war. From that time England has been in no serious danger from foreign conquest in the interests of Roman Catholicism. Such

Attack by the counter-reformation upon Elizabeth, 1570-1588.

perils passed away for ever as the shattered armada drew sullenly off towards the north sea. But the results of the attempt did not so easily pass away. Spain and the pope stood out before men's minds as the acknowledged enemies of the nation. To adhere to their religion was to be in principle, if not in fact, a traitor. The lurid memories of the fires of Smithfield were recalled by the persecutions of Alva in the Low Countries, and the massacre of S. Bartholomew in France. Stimulated by the passions excited by the war and the plots, they stamped themselves deep upon the heart of the nation, and a Roman Catholic became to the majority of his countrymen a cruel bigot, and a dark and insidious plotter who had forfeited all moral rights.

National hatred of Roman Catholicism.

Such a view was not wholly the creation of religious prejudice. Ever since Pius v. had declared Elizabeth deposed, and absolved her subjects from all allegiance to her, it had been impossible for an English Roman Catholic to be loyal both to his religion and to his sovereign. He could not take an oath of allegiance to Elizabeth, he could not logically even support her government, without setting at naught the supremacy of the pope, and denying his deposing power. He could not acknowledge the supremacy of the pope, even in theory, without thereby denying the right of the queen to retain her crown and demand his allegiance. Never were men placed in a more awkward predicament by their leader than were the English Roman Catholics by Pius v. They were made traitors against their will by the action of their own spiritual chief. The strain upon their consciences proved greater than some of them could bear. Hitherto the bulk of them had contentedly enough attended their parish churches as a matter of civil duty, while they usually heard mass said privately in their own houses. After the publication of the bull, they felt bound to withdraw themselves altogether from the legal services, and so formed a class of recusants obnoxious to the law and in opposition to the government. Some of the more ardent spirits, especially those who had been converted by the seminary priests, went

Conscientious difficulties of the English Roman Catholics.

much further. They accepted the position in which they found themselves. Traitors they had been made, and traitors accordingly they became. They threw themselves heartily into the foreign schemes for placing Mary of Scotland on the throne, they even joined in the dark plots of the Spaniards and the Jesuits for the murder of the queen.

Adoption by the crown of a policy of repression, 1571-1606.

A generous and a just policy would have tried to distinguish between these two classes, and prevent those who were merely traitors in theory from ever becoming so in fact, by binding them to the government by the ties of gratitude and patriotism. But Elizabeth and her ministers did not dare to run the risk. Encompassed as they were by enemies both open and secret, threatened alike by religious zeal and political hatred, they convinced themselves that the safest way of meeting the challenge of the pope was by a counter-declaration of war. Elizabeth took Pius v. at his word, and determined to treat all Roman Catholics in England as the traitors which the pope had commanded them to be. From 1571 to 1606 a series of penal statutes were passed which gradually took away from all English Roman Catholics, not only religious liberty, but even the ordinary rights of a citizen. The penalties of high treason were denounced against all who denied the queen's right to the throne, or obeyed bulls sent from Rome, or moved the subjects of the queen to be reconciled to the Roman Catholic Church. Jesuits and seminary priests were ordered to leave the country, and those who harboured them were made liable to execution. Recusants were obliged to pay a fine of £20 a month, and were forbidden to move more than five miles from their place of abode. The saying of mass and the hearing of mass were made punishable by fine and imprisonment. Finally after the gunpowder plot, in the year 1606, Roman Catholics were rendered ineligible to practise as barristers, attorneys, or physicians, were forbidden to act as guardians or trustees, and their houses were made at all times subject to domiciliary visits from the magistrates. By a refinement of cruelty the oath of allegiance tendered to them was so drawn up

as to oblige them to deny the deposing power of the pope as an abstract proposition.

Under the pressure of foreign aggression the policy of the government had completely changed its character. Instead of winning back Roman Catholics to the Church of England by wise and gentle management, the crown was now engaged in crushing them out of existence by punishment. Their clergy were put to death, the exercise of their religion prevented, their very existence punished by fines, their civil rights taken away. They were stamped by the law as unworthy of trust. About two hundred of their number, including clergy, laymen, and women, were executed, many of them were barbarously tortured. Actual loyalty proved no defence to theoretical treason. For years the majority of the Roman Catholics in England were oppressed by the full weight of the penal laws for sins which they had never committed, and deeds which they heartily abhorred. Such a policy could not but bring its own retribution. Successful in maintaining the safety of Elizabeth's throne and person, it left for posterity the ugly legacy of permanent and embittered religious division. The Roman Catholics were the first religious body to separate from the national Church and to form their own organisation outside it. Obloquy and persecution bound them together in a way which nothing else could have done. Their ostracism from the national life tended to make them into a foreign-minded clique, and at times rendered them a political danger. But from first to last their loyalty to the crown, save for the few years of Jacobite intrigue, has been as conspicuous in England, in spite of much provocation, as the want of it has been remarkable in Ireland.

Consequent permanence of Roman Catholicism in England.

The passionate patriotism evoked in the nation by the death-struggle with Spain and the papacy naturally fostered the growth of Puritanism. When the forces of foreign aggression and internal disaffection were being marshalled under the banners of Roman Catholicism for the conquest of England, it was no time for the opponents of Rome to be quarrelling among themselves. No longer did mere courtiers like

Growth of Puritanism.

Leicester and Essex embrace the Puritan cause for their own selfish purposes, but cautious ministers like Cecil, and sober Parliament men like Bacon, recognised in Puritanism the strongest bulwark against popery, and were loth to check its development. As the crisis approached and the storm cloud was about to burst, many of the longest heads and stoutest hearts in England felt that the only chance of safety for the threatened queen was to throw herself boldly and unreservedly into the Protestant camp, and rally the Calvinist nations of the world against the common enemy. But Elizabeth was not to be led away from her deliberate policy by such a will-o'-the-wisp. The solidarity of the nation under its queen had been from the first the corner-stone of her system in politics and religion. She would not abandon it now in favour of a visionary union abroad which could not fail to destroy all prospects of unity at home. She was ready to allow great difference of theological view. She had no desire to compel a rigid uniformity of doctrinal statement or ceremonial observance. But she was determined to prevent the introduction of a presbyterian system of government into the Church, and to enforce the honest use of the Prayer book by the ministers of the Church. In this she knew she had the support of the bulk of the nation whatever foreboding ministers or eager partisans might say, and she calmly pursued the policy which she had chosen regardless of the swelling tide of Puritan feeling. In 1573 she issued a proclamation for the punishment of nonconformists. In 1576 she sent Wentworth to the Tower because he insisted on the right of Parliament to deal with ecclesiastical questions. In 1577 she suppressed the prophesyings. In 1583, on the death of Grindal, she appointed Whitgift to be archbishop of Canterbury because she could trust him to carry out her policy. Whitgift was in his theology a Puritan. He professed strongly the doctrinal system of Calvin, but he objected no less strongly to his system of discipline, and maintained the episcopal form of government. A conforming Puritan himself, he had no sympathy with the narrower minds which scrupled at the government of bishops

Policy of the queen.

and the ceremonies of the Prayer-book, while they enjoyed full liberty of thought and doctrine. As a statesman, he felt with the queen the weakness in the face of the foe which permanent division must necessarily bring with it. Without hesitation, therefore, he plunged into the struggle and prepared to maintain the government and discipline of the Church against all enemies, Puritan and Roman Catholic alike.

Repressive measures of Whitgift, 1583-1593.

By articles which were drawn up by the archbishop in 1583 and sanctioned by the queen, no one was permitted to execute any ecclesiastical function unless he first subscribed to the royal supremacy, pledged himself to use the book of Common Prayer and none other in his ministrations, and accepted the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion. In the following year he drew up a list of twenty-four articles, or rather interrogatories, which were to be administered by the court of High Commission to any of the clergy whom the court, of its own initiative, thought good to question. By them the court obliged a suspect minister to answer upon oath (called the oath *ex officio*) as to whether he was in the habit of breaking the law, and so forced him to become evidence against himself. For this reason they were severely commented on by Cecil (who had been made Lord Burleigh in 1571) as 'too much savouring of the Romish inquisition, and rather a device to seek for offenders than to reform any.' Whitgift replied with spirit that the procedure was one well known to many courts of the realm, and had not been called into action excepting when private remonstrances had failed. That the crisis was a more serious one than Burleigh was willing to admit was fully proved in the Parliaments of 1584 and 1585, when the Puritan party, under the patronage of Leicester, endeavoured to get a presbyterian system of government for the Church imposed by Parliament without consulting the Church. Whitgift met the attack with vigour. He held a conference at Lambeth in 1584 with two of the leading Puritan representatives, in the presence of Leicester and Walsingham. He issued a code of canons in 1585 which met many of the objections to the existing disciplinary

system. He proved to the queen and Burleigh that the non-conforming Puritans were a body both small in number, and, for the most part, slender in ability, and had acquired a fictitious importance through the support given to them by influential members of the council.[1] Elizabeth gave the energetic archbishop her warm support, and made him a member of the council in 1586, while the absence of Leicester in the Low Countries, and his death in 1588, deprived the Puritans of their most powerful advocate.

No sooner was it seen that the tide which had for so long been running in their favour was about to turn than the Puritans in their chagrin lost all self-control. They plunged into the wildest excesses of literary scurrility, and quickly alienated from their side every man of sense and of taste by their diatribes. The Martin Marprelate libels are distinguished among compositions of that sort by a superabundance of abuse and a deficiency of wit and argument. The archbishop was attacked personally as the 'Beelzebub of Canterbury, the Canterbury Caiaphas, a monstrous anti-Christ, a most bloody tyrant'; while the bishops appear as 'incarnate devils, cozening knaves, and enemies of God'; and the clergy are 'dolts, hogs, drunkards, foxes, dogs, desperate and forlorn atheists.' Coarse abuse like this was too much even for an age which was not over particular, and Martin Marprelate probably did more to render the success of the Puritan cause impossible than all the disciplinary measures of Whitgift. From that time it became clearer year by year that opinion was beginning to turn in the opposite direction. The queen and the archbishop were not slow to take advantage of the change. Perry and Udal, the chief writers of the libels, were seized, and both atoned for their crime by death—the one in prison and the other on the scaffold. In 1590 Cartwright, the original author of the book of Discipline, was committed to prison for refusing to take the *ex officio* oath. A number of other ministers all over the country met with the same fate, and the magistrates complained that the

The Martin Marprelate libels, 1588.

[1] From returns made to Whitgift it appears that in ten dioceses there were 786 beneficed incumbents who conformed to the law, and forty-nine who did not.

prisons were filled with conscientious nonconformists who refused to submit even under the questionings of the rack.

Slowly the conviction forced itself on Elizabeth that there was a stubbornness about Puritanism which she was powerless to subdue. The numbers of the nonconformists were few. Now that public opinion was moving away from them they were dangerous only when they were martyrs. It was better to cut off the rotten limb altogether than maintain a festering sore. Accordingly, in 1593, she appealed to Parliament, and an act was passed providing that those who refused to attend church, or who attended unauthorised religious meetings of their own, should be banished from the country. The result was completely successful. The followers of Cartwright who preferred the presbyterian system to that of the Church readily fell back for the time into the mass of conforming Puritans, and determined to await a more favourable opportunity for asserting their views. The more advanced reformers, who objected to any Church system at all, whether episcopal or presbyterian, and insisted on the right of each separate congregation to decide for itself all questions of government and worship, recognised that their position as nonconforming members of the Church of England was untenable. Despairing of winning Englishmen over to their view, they accepted the situation and betook themselves to banishment for conscience sake. They became avowedly 'separatists' from the Church of England just as the Roman Catholics had already become. Settling in Holland under the name of Brownists, or later, of Independents, some of them retained the rigid predestinarian doctrines of Calvin common to them and the presbyterians, but totally rejected the Genevan system of discipline, and appeared in the political development of Puritanism during the civil war as the champions of a real though limited religious toleration. Others who concentrated their minds more upon the spiritual character of religion became closely connected with the mystical sects of Calvinists, such as the Family of Love and the Mennonite Baptists, which abounded in Holland, and became the fruitful parents

Banishment of the nonconformists, 1593.

of the numerous fanatical sects of the time of the Commonwealth, and the legitimate precursors of George Fox and the Quakers. For the time at any rate, Elizabeth and Whitgift were triumphant. Nonconformity had been successfully suppressed at home, and Protestant separatism driven beyond the seas. For the few remaining years of the queen's reign, Whitgift was free to turn his attention to the important administrative reforms which the Church so sorely needed. Order was taken by the archbishop to secure a higher standard of learning among the clergy, and canons were passed in 1597 and 1601 to prevent the evils of non-residence and effect the reform of the ecclesiastical courts.

Success of the queen's policy.

On the accession of James I. in 1603 the Puritans determined at once to press their grievances upon his notice. On his way from Scotland to London, a petition signed by some 800 of the Puritan clergy was presented to him asking for the abolition of confirmation, the disuse of the sign of the cross in baptism, and the ring in marriage, and of the terms 'priest' and 'absolution' in the Prayer-book, but stating at the same time that the petitioners did not desire the dissolution of the State ecclesiastical, but only its reformation. In consequence of this petition, James summoned a meeting of leading Churchmen to confer together under his presidency, and see if it was desirable to make any alterations in the Prayer book; and he asked four of the most prominent of the Puritan clergy—Reynolds, Sparkes, Chaderton, and Knewstubbs—to attend and state their case to the conference. The meeting was held at Hampton Court, in January 1604, but it soon appeared that the changes which the Puritans desired went far beyond a toleration for scrupulous consciences, and amounted to nothing less than the founding of a new Church. They demanded the alteration of the Articles so as to teach the Calvinistic doctrines of election and reprobation, and the indefectibility of grace, and to deny the offer of salvation through Christ to all mankind. This, of course, was radically to alter the whole scheme of religion put forward by the Church, and would necessarily have

The Millenary petition, 1603.

The Hampton Court conference, 1604.

carried with it the drastic recasting of the Prayer-book. They further argued in favour of the abolition of confirmation, and of the disuse of the apocrypha, of the cross in baptism and the ring in marriage, and of the churching of women and the wearing of the surplice. Reynolds further used words which implied that they looked forward to a limitation of the powers of the bishops by obliging them to consult the presbyters. James at once scented the presbyterian system in so insidious a proposal. 'A Scottish presbytery,' he cried, with conviction born of painful experience, 'agreeth as well with monarchy as God and the devil. Then Jack and Tom and Will and Dick will meet and censure me and my council. Until you find that I grow lazy let that alone.' After this outburst the Puritan arguments in favour of the relaxation of the laws respecting the dresses and ceremonies had but little chance of being heard. It was evident from Reynolds's speech that they would not be content without a radical change of the Church doctrine and government, and in presence of demands so far-reaching it was useless to discuss seriously means for affording relief for tender consciences on minor points.

The essence of the Puritan demand from first to last had consistently been to make the Church Puritan, not to find a footing for Puritanism within its borders. In 1604 as in 1580, and again in 1662, two incompatible systems of religion were striving to get the mastery in England; and James, like his predecessor, showed no signs of hesitation directly he had grasped that point. While agreeing to the Puritan demand for a new translation of the Bible—which resulted in the present authorised version published in 1611—he threw the weight of the crown unreservedly on to the side of the Church on the question of discipline, and determined to force the Puritans to accept her teaching and conform to her laws. In 1604 a code of canons, drawn up by the Convocations in the preceding year, received the sanction of the crown. They asserted in no doubtful terms the historical claims of the Church to be part of the Church Catholic, condemned those who maintained that the Prayer-book and Articles were in any point

The canons of 1604.

superstitious, or the government of the Church by bishops contrary to Scripture, and obliged all the clergy to swear that they subscribed willingly and *ex animo* to the royal supremacy, the Prayer-book, and the Articles. Bancroft, who succeeded Whitgift in December 1604, at once proceeded to enforce the canons upon all the clergy. The bulk of the Puritans, when put to the test, took the oath rather than incur banishment, but the more strenuous and zealous of them to the number of some 300, fled over sea, and sought among their fellow-religionists in Holland and elsewhere an asylum for their bodies and peace for their souls.

Failure of the Puritan attack.

The Hampton Court conference marks the end of the first great effort of Puritanism to obtain ascendancy over England. It entered on the struggle with great advantages. It possessed in the Calvinistic doctrines of election and reprobation the basis of a logical if ruthless religious system. It found ready to its hand in the Institutes of Calvin the only clear and consistent text-book of Protestant theology. Even at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign it inspired the religious beliefs of half the bishops and a considerable number of the clergy. Its sacramental doctrines quickly obtained the assent of the majority of the educated laity. The national hatred of Roman Catholicism, called out by the bull of deposition and the consequent wars and conspiracies, fostered its growth and gave it a political sanction. For some time men thought that room could be found for it within the system of the Church. But, as year by year it developed on its own lines, it became increasingly evident that it was impossible to combine a Calvinistic Church theology resting on the doctrine of election with the Catholic Church theology resting on the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. Still more impossible was it found to combine a Calvinistic system of Church government, resting upon a '*classis*' of presbyters as the centre of authority, with the system of the Catholic Church, which made the bishop the unit of government and the source of jurisdiction. Because the struggle broke out about dresses and ceremonies, men have jumped to the conclusion that

dresses and ceremonies were the cause of the struggle. History tells a very different tale. Dresses and ceremonies are in themselves indifferent. As the visible expression of doctrine they are in the highest degree significant. The Puritans objected to the use of the cap and the surplice because to them it meant the continuity of the Church, its claim in England to be the heir of the Church of Athanasius and of Lanfranc. They refused to use the sign of the cross in baptism because to them it meant the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. They rejected the ring in marriage because to them it seemed to assert the sacramental character of the rite. They demanded the abolition of confirmation because they did not believe that it was a means of grace. They endeavoured to introduce the book of Discipline because they desired to undermine and destroy the authority of the episcopate. It is open to men to argue that a Puritan England would have been a nobler thing than an Anglican England, that the simple piety, the strong sense of conscience, the self-centred but sturdy ruggedness of conviction, which distinguished the Puritan's religion of power, and illumined the narrowness of his intellectual life with the light of moral achievement, would have been better for mankind than the softer, if broader and deeper, character produced by the religion of love. It is possible that some might be found to maintain that the Genevan discipline was a better nurse of man than the system of the Church. Arguments there may be to show that Puritanism was better than the Church—there are none to prove that the two systems were compatible one with the other. The English government and the English nation had to choose between them, and the Hampton Court conference marks the choice which they made. The Church Catholic was to remain the religion of Englishmen, and, if the Puritans wished to supplant it, they must do so by force and by force alone.

Real character of the struggle.

CHAPTER XVI

THE STRENGTHENING OF THE CHURCH

A.D. 1604-1662

The vigour of the Puritan and Roman Catholic attacks upon the Church of England threw Englishmen back upon first principles. They had to ask themselves what they meant when they said in the creed, 'I believe in the Holy Catholic Church,' and when they described their Prayer-book as 'that of the Church according to the use of the Church of England.' They had to formulate afresh the arguments by which they proved to themselves the reality of their heritage in the Catholic Church while refusing to submit to the claims of the papacy. They had to justify alike their treatment of Puritanism as a system of religion incompatible with that of the Church, and of Roman Catholicism as a tyranny fastened upon the religion of the Church. They had to prove by the depth of their knowledge, the width of their intellectual range, the devotion and self-sacrifice of their lives, that true ideals of learning and of saintliness were not yet dead. The Reformation movement in England produced no great characters and few great writers. The Church revival of the seventeenth century, with all its faults, was an age of saints and of students.

Effect of the struggle upon the Church of England.

Thrown back upon herself, isolated by the course of events from the rest of the Catholic world, the Church of England had to restate her theology and her principles, and revive her spiritual life in the light of the crisis through which she was passing. Without surrendering for one moment her legitimate share in the teaching of the fathers and of the schoolmen, she had learned

from the Reformation to refer her theology back to the test of the Scriptures. While expressly acknowledging the authoritative force of the creeds and the decisions of the œcumenical councils, she had felt the necessity of commending the truths which they express to the reason and the conscience as well as to the obedience of man. Without denying in the least the importance of ecclesiastical tradition and corporate unity, she had felt bound to advance constitutional and national claims against absolutism and misgovernment. She called to her aid a wider theology than that of Protestantism. She claimed to have a truer outlook than that of Rome. Protestantism was every day yielding its assertion of private judgment more and more to the authority of a few leading theologians. Roman Catholicism was concentrating its intellectual and administrative forces more and more in obedience to the almost military sway of its official head. But the English Church was seeking to base its faith upon Scripture as the source of truth, to justify it by the consent of the Church as the witness and interpreter of Scripture, and to prove it and explain it by reason, the illuminator and informer of the mind and conscience. This middle position between the dogmas of Rome and the dogmatism of the Protestants had no doubt its special difficulties. It demanded moral and intellectual effort. It provided no oracle for the solution of all doubts. It sought for unity through the compelling power of truth, not in the suppression of the will. Within certain limits it encouraged variety of thought, and did not define those limits very exactly. Exaggeration on either side, hiding itself under the garb of logic, might lead to popery or to rationalism. Ardent spirits, undisciplined and unbalanced, are always demanding of religion a short cut to absolute truth, and forget that if the Church attempts to satisfy their demands she is trying to improve upon the methods of her Founder.

Her assimilation of the lessons of the Reformation.

The Church of England, at any rate, made no such mistake in her reformation. In all her public documents, her Prayer-book, her homilies, her articles, her canons, she was especially careful

not to commit herself to a single word which went beyond the language of Scripture and antiquity. She even suffered some important doctrines to be so guardedly stated in her Prayer-book as to require for their elucidation both the traditions of the past and the theology of the future. The reformed formularies of the English Church contained no systematic statement of belief, of worship, or of government. They appealed for their interpretation to the witness of the Church Universal. But before they could assume their sovereignty over the minds and consciences of men, they required to be studied in the light of theological reasoning. This was the special need which pressed upon the English Church at the close of the sixteenth century. The flood of Calvinism, which had poured so relentlessly upon her, had obliterated the old landmarks. The traditions of the past were broken and lost. Men, drifting about in the dark, and loosed from their moorings, tried to find safety by piecing together planks from the ships of the Church and of Calvin. But it was not to be. It was impossible to read Calvinism into the Prayer-book as a whole. The attempt to supersede the Prayer-book by Calvinism failed. But if the religion of the Prayer-book was to remain supreme, it was necessary to justify it by reason as well as to enforce it by law, and a new and sympathetic theology was required for the purpose. The work of Hooker, and Andrewes, and Jeremy Taylor was wanted to secure the results of the work of Elizabeth and Whitgift and Bancroft.

Special need of a body of Anglican theology.

Just at the close of the century this necessity for a review of her whole doctrinal and historical position in the light of the Reformation was beginning to bear fruit in the Church of England. In 1589 Bancroft preached his famous sermon at S. Paul's to prove the claim of episcopacy to be a divine and Scriptural order, and not merely a convenient form of government approved of by the civil power. In 1591 the same doctrine was enforced in a learned treatise by Saravia, a Dutch theologian who had taken refuge in England from the persecution to which he had been

Works of Bancroft, Saravia, and Bilson, 1589-1593.

subjected in his own country. In 1593 Bilson, warden of Winchester College, asserted the full doctrine of the Apostolical succession, and maintained that there was a clear difference of function between bishops and presbyters from the times of the Apostles. Richard Hooker approached the subject from a more philosophical point of view. In his *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, the first four books of which were published in 1594, he admits that in his own opinion government is a matter which lies within the competence of the Church itself to alter. So, although episcopacy has in fact descended from the Apostles themselves as the form of government which the Church has adopted, it must not be considered an indispensable necessity of Church life. But in making this admission to the Puritan contention in the matter of government, he throws the whole weight of his argument against the very basis of the structure upon which Puritanism stands. The authority of Scripture interpreted by the dominant theologian is to him a foundation far too narrow to be the rule of man's faith or the guide of his conduct. Not from one source but from many come the lights which illuminate his path and the forces which direct his steps. He lives in a world ruled by law; and the law of the universe is nothing less than the product of the reason of God. God is not, as Calvin depicted Him, outside the range of the moral law; but in the laws which regulate the physical and moral world, man finds his nearest approach to the perfection of God. The revelation of the Scripture is the complement, not the substitute, of natural law, and the reason of man exercises its highest function when justifying and explaining the laws of God, both natural and supernatural, to the moral nature and intellect of man. The reason of man, thus sifted and tested by experience, and applied to the facts of life, becomes the true basis of authority, because it approaches most nearly to the reason of God. Called forth by the aggressive Calvinism of the time, the argument of Hooker did much more than answer it. It laid down principles which showed where the intellectual basis of Puritanism was wrong and why it was wrong. As it sank into the minds of thoughtful men it

Richard Hooker, 1594.

became increasingly impossible for them to cling to Calvinism as a theological and philosophical system.

The difference was soon seen at the universities and on the episcopal bench. In 1596 Bilson, the strenuous defender of the right divine of episcopacy, became bishop of Worcester. In 1598 William Laud took his master's degree at Oxford, and entered on his long struggle with Calvinism there. In 1605 Lancelot Andrewes was consecrated to the see of Chichester. In 1608 Neile, the patron of Laud, received that of Rochester, and was succeeded in 1611, on his translation to Lichfield, by Buckeridge, the tutor of Laud at Oxford and his predecessor as president of S. John's College. James for some time suspected the growing movement. Though led by his intellectual tastes to prize the friendship of Andrewes, he was by no means prepared to accept his theology. He deliberately passed him over for the primacy on the death of Bancroft in 1610 in favour of the Puritan, George Abbot, and sent representatives of his own to the Calvinistic synod of Dort in 1618. Nevertheless, with advancing years he began to draw closer and closer to the Church. He gave the deanery of Gloucester to Laud in 1616, with special injunctions to reform the cathedral, took him as his companion on his visit to Scotland in 1617, made him bishop of S. David's in 1621, and chose him to maintain the doctrine of the Church of England against the Jesuit Fisher in 1622. Overall, the author of the part of the Church Catechism which relates to the Sacraments, was made bishop of Lichfield in 1614, and Goodman, who held extremely advanced sacramental doctrines, was raised to the see of Gloucester in 1625.

Consequent reaction against Calvinism.

Thus, before James I. was carried to his grave, the power of Puritanism in England as a religious system had been greatly weakened. Philosophers, like Bacon and Hooker, rebelled against its intellectual narrowness; students of history, like Saravia and Bilson, protested against its unhistorical assumptions; devotional natures, like those of George Herbert and Nicholas Ferrar, could find no place for worship, no sense of reverence, in its hard and

individualistic teaching. Men of affairs, like Bancroft and James I., dreaded its anti-monarchical tendencies. The reaction against its predominance came from many sides. It centred, however, mainly round two prominent and characteristic figures. Lancelot Andrewes holds, with Ken and Wilson and S. Hugh of Lincoln, the foremost place among the saintly bishops of the English Church. But it was not only as a saint that his character impressed itself upon his time. Averse to all secular employment, and wholly devoted to the interests of religion, he yet managed to live a life of detachment in the world, and discharge the duties of a courtier as well as of a bishop. His gentle nature, mature wisdom, and kindly wit, endeared him to the selfish politicians of the court, who respected him as a saint and did not fear him as a rival. He walked among the ecclesiastical sycophants who surrounded James like a being from a nobler world. 'My lords,' said the king once to him and to Neile on a sudden, 'cannot I take my subjects' money when I want it without all this formality of Parliament?' 'God forbid, sir, but that you should,' burst at once from the lips of Neile; 'you are the breath of our nostrils.' Andrewes remained silent. 'How think you, my lord?' reiterated James. 'I think, sir,' replied the bishop slowly, 'that it is lawful for you to take my brother Neile's money, for he offers it.' His counsel was as eagerly sought in secular matters as in questions of religion and conscience. His sermons were more prized than those of any preacher since Latimer, not because of the richness of his eloquence or the incisiveness of his style, but on account of the vividness and lucidity of his comments upon Scripture, and the depth as well as the humour of his moral teaching.

Lancelot Andrewes.

But it was not primarily as a preacher, or as a divine acceptable to the court and unharmed by it, or even as a master in the spiritual life, that Andrewes assumed the special position which he holds in history. It was rather a combination of qualities which made him stand out above all his compeers as the typical representative of the English Church. It was to Andrewes that James turned to defend the Church of England against the attacks of the

veteran controversialist, Bellarmine. In his controversial works, *Tortura Torti* and the *Responsio* and the *Answer to Cardinal Perron*, he makes boldly that appeal to history which is the *articulus stantis aut cadentis ecclesiæ* of the English Church. The Roman claim to supremacy and the doctrines which spring therefrom he condemns, because they are new doctrines and therefore not *de fide*. The royal supremacy over the English Church he justifies as implying only that regulative authority which Scripture approves, and emperors and kings have exercised. He asserts the moral authority of the English Church, just because with all her anomalies of practice she teaches only that which Scripture and the fathers teach, and has the right of practising all that they enjoin. In the correspondence of the moral sense of Englishmen to the moral authority of the organised Society thus renovated and purified lay to his mind the hope of the future and the justification of the past. Andrewes rose to the full height of the English position in its foundation in learning, its breadth of conception, and its justification in history. Naturally it was to Andrewes that Isaac Casaubon turned for comfort and guidance when at the end of a storm-tossed career he found peace for his soul in England—'the isle of the blessed.' In him he recognised the true spirit of Christ. 'No words,' he says, 'can express what true piety, what uprightness of judgment I find in him. I am attracted to the man by his profound learning, and am charmed with a graciousness of manner not common in one so highly placed. . . . Would that our Gallican theologians would imitate the bishop of Ely. I dare to affirm that they would reap a most plentiful reward for their moderation.'

The luminous knowledge and the sympathetic moderation which the great scholar valued were equally prized by the clergy of his dioceses. Andrewes, with a wise toleration, was content with enforcing upon others a minimum of decency and reverence in public worship, while he claimed and exercised for himself the right to set them the example of displaying in his own chapel the full ceremonial system of the Church. The list of altar furniture which has come down to us shows that the bishop was accustomed

to use copes and lights and incense, and the mixed chalice and wafer bread at the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, and that the altar was duly furnished with different coloured altar cloths, besides linen and silk veils for the chalice, while a credence table stood close by. The consecration service for a new church which is now always used is substantially that which was drawn up by Andrewes for his own diocese. We know from other sources that he observed carefully the days of fasting and abstinence recommended by the Church, and paid special attention to the duties of a confessor. He forms therefore a very strong link between the old and the new state of things in England. The old race of priests ordained before the breach with Rome was hardly extinct before Andrewes was himself ordained. The torch of Catholic doctrine and practice had hardly died into embers under the blustering onslaught of Elizabethan Puritanism, before it burst forth again into renewed and purified life in the steady hands of Andrewes. And so great was the ascendancy of his character and the charm of his personality that no place was found for objectors. Surrounded as he was by opponents, breathing, as he did, the difficult air of the court, yet no one thought of attacking him for his doctrine or denouncing him for his ritual. The shaft of envy and the tongue of malice were paralysed in the presence of that serene and transparent life, and the angry waves of passion were stilled in turbulent England until the gracious servant of God and the Church had passed to his rest.

Comparison of Laud and Andrewes.

Far otherwise was it with William Laud. Few men in life, few characters in history, have attracted to themselves so great prejudice and aroused such bitter hatred. Religious practices and political theories, which raised among the opponents of Andrewes only a smile of tolerant pity, caused Laud to be denounced by his foes as an enemy to religion and a traitor to his country. Men trusted Andrewes, and believed the best of him, however much they disagreed with him. They distrusted Laud, and were ready to believe the worst of him, even when they did not disagree with him fundamentally. Partly, no doubt, the difference was one of

outward circumstances. Andrewes was essentially a student and a man of example. Laud, though learned, was essentially a man of action. It was the business of Andrewes to teach, that of Laud to enforce the lesson. Partly, no doubt, it was one of temperament. Andrewes was singularly patient and gentle; his extraordinary courtesy is specially singled out by Casaubon for praise. Laud was apt to be choleric, hasty, and dictatorial. 'He did court persons too little,' says Clarendon, 'nor cared to make his designs appear as candid as they were. He never abated anything of his severity and rigour to men of all conditions, or in the sharpness of his language and expressions, which was so natural to him that he could not debate anything without some commotion, nor bear contradiction in debate with that patience and temper which were necessary.' But mainly it lay in the fact that Andrewes was but the advocate of unpopular religious principles, while Laud was the representative of a political system which Englishmen believed to be destructive of their liberties. By the unhappy policy of James I. and his son, and the too willing acquiescence of the bishops, the Church became identified with prerogative government, and Puritanism with the assertion of national liberty. Laud stood out before men as one of the chief supporters of prerogative and the most vigorous opponent of Puritanism. Religious distrust, envenomed by political hatred and increased by his quick temper and unpopular manners, quickly raised round the character and objects of Laud clouds of misrepresentation and party feeling which are only just beginning to roll away. To some of the historians of the past his attachment to prerogative government and Catholic principles of religion has made his name synonymous with meanness, cruelty, and bigotry, while to others his noble constancy and pathetic end have thrown around his head the halo of a martyr's crown.

Truth, it is now being recognised, lies between the two extremes. Laud, like many other men called upon to bear rule in difficult times, was far wiser and nobler in his conceptions of policy than he was skilful or generous in his methods. In those conceptions he was the legitimate

The principles of Laud.

successor of Andrewes and Hooker. He saw the real greatness of the position of the English Church in its double character as Catholic and anti-papal, in its double appeal to Scripture and to history. He looked forward to the time when other national Churches would come and nestle under her shadow, accept her leadership, and claim like her their liberty in the Catholic Church. He was profoundly convinced of the truths which she taught and of her right to teach them fully and freely. He welcomed and encouraged learning, and was a munificent benefactor to his college and his university, because he was certain that light, knowledge, and education were the truest champions of religion. In the midst of his busiest days he never forgot to minister to the needs of learning whenever the opportunity offered. Ignorance he ever recognised as the chiefest enemy of the Church. He saw the identity of interests between the English Church and the orthodox Churches of the east in the controversy with Rome, and showed much sympathy in his treatment of the differences between east and west. Indeed, in theological controversy and in dealing with differences of religious opinion he gave evidence of a broader and more tolerant spirit than he is usually believed to have possessed. In his argument with the Jesuit Fisher he was willing to allow the Church of Rome to be part of the Church Catholic, though not the whole of it, and he claimed credit for the Church of England that she nowhere asserted her Articles to be fundamental, or attempted to impose them upon others. In his reply to the fierce attack made upon him by Lord Say and Sele in the House of Lords, he condemned the Calvinism which was the foundation of Puritanism on the express ground of the narrow conception of God which the doctrine of reprobation involves: 'Which opinion my very soul abominates,' he cries; 'for it makes God, the God of all mercies, to be the most fierce and unreasonable tyrant in the world.' It was the limitation of salvation and of the operations of grace to a few which he thought so intellectually and morally wrong. He won Chillingworth back from Rome by proving to him how small was the area of dogmatic truth enforced as necessary to salvation in the English

Church. He retained John Hales in her communion by insisting on the freedom of the offer of salvation to all mankind. 'The ever memorable John Hales,' says Clarendon, 'would often say that he would renounce the religion of the Church of England to-morrow if it obliged him to believe that any other Christian should be damned.' 'Nor,' said Laud, in a noble passage, 'will I ever take upon me to express that tenet or opinion, the denial of the foundation only excepted, which may shut any Christian, even the meanest, out of heaven.'

Strength of the English Church.

It was just this strength of theological and historical position, this moral force, this wide sympathy with the difficulties of the Christian world, this capacity for answering to the real needs of human nature, this breadth and solidity of doctrinal basis, which raised the English Church in the seventeenth century so far above the petty narrowness of Puritanism, and ensured in the end the triumph of the principles of Hooker, and Andrewes, and Laud. Between Cranmer and Hooker lies a wide gulf of separation. They live in different worlds. One is the child of an age of revolution, the other of reconstruction. But from Hooker the succession passes on in unbroken line through the greatest names of the English Church, from Andrewes to Laud, and Jeremy Taylor, and Cosin, and Ken, and Butler, to Keble, and Newman, and Pusey, and Church. No one of them had a wider intellectual and moral grasp of her character, or truer loyalty to her principles, than had William Laud.

Prominence of Laud as an administrator.

Unfortunately the theologian, the patron of learning, the tolerant sympathiser with religious difficulty, the spiritual guide, were, by the necessities of the case, thrown into the background of Laud's life. The world at large did not recognise in him the theologian who had by his persuasions recalled from Rome twenty-two of her converts. It did not think of him as the counsellor who had retained in the communion of the Church of England the powerful duke of Buckingham, and as his confessor had developed in his giddy nature whatever of seriousness and purpose he had acquired.

It did not know him as the man of culture who had rebuilt his college, reformed his university, been the first to promote and reward the study of the Semitic languages, and founded the university press. His activity as a ruler and administrator was so great as to crowd all else out of men's minds. He was identified by them with the enforcement of unpopular Church discipline and the maintenance of unpopular royal government. As a disciplinarian men feared him, as an uncompromising opponent of Puritanism they distrusted him, as a minister of the crown they hated him, and when their opportunity came they could see in him nothing more than their enemy, and struck him ruthlessly down.

His support and use of the royal prerogative.

From the point of view of Puritan party politics they were right. The Calvinism which formed the religious strength of Puritanism was looked upon by Laud as incompatible with true views of the Church and of religion. The supremacy of Parliament over the crown, which was the logical result of the doctrines of Eliot and Pym, seemed to him incompatible with the monarchical constitution of England and the Scriptural theory of monarchy. Though no friend to absolute government, he preferred that the king should control the Parliament rather than that the Parliament should control the king. He leaned all the weight of the ecclesiastical authority on the side of Charles I. against his Parliaments, and claimed the assistance of the royal authority in his efforts to free the Church from Calvinism. The discipline of the Church, the patronage of the crown, the influence of the government, were all to be brought into play against Calvinism as the common enemy. Punishment was to be dealt out to evil doers, the rubrics enforced, and dignity restored to the fabrics and services of the Church, in order that men might know the justice of her claims, and learn the greatness of their heritage. 'No one thing,' said Laud, 'hath made conscientious men more wavering in their own minds or more apt and easy to be drawn aside from the sincerity of the religion professed in the Church of England than the want of uniform and decent order in too many churches

of the kingdom. It is true the inward worship of the heart is the great service of God, and no service acceptable without it; but the external worship of God in His Church is the great witness to the world that our heart stands right in that service of God. And a great weakness it is not to see the strength which ceremonies —things weak enough in themselves, God knows—add even to religion itself.'

Imbued with these principles, Laud devoted the best years of his life to the battle with Calvinism, and the restoration of the discipline and of the worship of the Church. Before he left Oxford on receiving the bishopric of S. David's in 1621, he had the satisfaction of seeing the influence of Calvinism decidedly on the wane, and the study of the Institutes replaced by that of the fathers. Already, in 1616, on entering into the deanery of Gloucester, he had procured the removal of the altar from the middle to the east end of the choir, and ordered the officials to make a humble reverence in its direction on entering the cathedral church, in accordance with the canon. In 1622 he conducted his controversy with the Jesuit Fisher, at the king's request, and was chosen as his confessor by the all-powerful favourite Buckingham. This brought him into close relations with prince Charles, who conceived a strong and lasting affection for him, and made him his principal counsellor in ecclesiastical matters when he came to the throne in 1625. In 1626 he was asked by Buckingham to draw up for the king's use a list of the more prominent clergy, labelled according to their views as orthodox or Puritan, and suggested the royal proclamation for the peace of the Church, in which the king forbade any discussion by writing or preaching of opinions contrary to the formularies of the Church. In the same year he was translated to the see of Bath and Wells. During the earlier years of Charles's reign he was found at the king's side defending Mountague from the unreasonable attacks of the Commons, and Sibthorp, Manwaring, and Buckingham from the consequences of their own indiscretion. In 1628 he wrote the declaration prefixed to the Articles, which was promulgated by royal authority

Growing importance of Laud, 1616-1628.

alone, with the object of putting a stop to unprofitable controversy. So prominent a figure had he become among the advisers of Charles that he was openly denounced by name by the Commons in their famous remonstrance against the Arminians of that year. But Charles was not the man to draw back at the bidding of the Commons, nor was Laud likely to hesitate if the king required his services.

The royal answer to the remonstrance was to advance Laud to the important see of London on the promotion of Montaigne to the archbishopric of York in the same year. For five years Laud ruled over the most Puritan diocese in England. They were years of incessant activity. The reform of the university of Oxford, the large additions to the buildings of his own college, the restoration of S. Paul's cathedral in London, the suppression of the Puritan trust for the maintenance of afternoon lectureships in the London churches, much judicial work in the courts of the Star Chamber and the High Commission, much political and administrative work at the council table of the king, helped to fill up the tale of these busy years. The death of Abbot in 1633 brought him into a more prominent position still. 'My lord's grace of Canterbury, you are very welcome,' said the king to him when he met him for the first time after the death of the archbishop. Seated firmly on the archiepiscopal throne, and sure of the sympathy of the king and the support of the government, Laud set himself to his great task of vindicating the Church of England from all complicity with Calvinism.

His activity as bishop of London, 1628-1633.

There was no department of Church life which his energy did not enliven, no recesses too dark for his eye to penetrate. A visitation of his province, carried out by his vicar-general in 1633-1636, did much to remove the outward signs of Puritan nonconformity. The use of the surplice was enforced, kneeling at the reception of Communion enjoined, the Holy Table moved from the body of the church to the east end, placed altar-wise along the east wall, and railed in to preserve it from desecration. Church-

His enforcement of discipline as archbishop of Canterbury, 1633-1640.

wardens were obliged to repair the church fabrics, and cathedral chapters to observe their own statutes. The court of High Commission under Laud's presidency kept a vigilant guard over the morals of the nation and the rights of the Church. Not only the fanatical tailor who held extravagant opinions which he could not explain, or the attendants at humble and illiterate conventicles, or the layman who took upon himself the duty of preaching and claimed the special call of God in his favour, were obliged to make their submission and suffer for their errors. The country squire who had seized part of the glebe or the churchyard to round off his estate, the vicar who attacked his parishioners by name from the pulpit, the man of position who was guilty of incest, the courtier who treated his wife with cruelty, were all brought under the chastising hand of the High Commission. 'Laud intended,' says Clarendon, 'that the discipline of the Church should be felt as well as spoken of, and that it should be applied to the greatest and most splendid transgressors as well as to the punishment of smaller offences and of meaner offenders.' Under his influence the bishops began to make much more searching inquiries in their visitation articles, and to revive the discipline of the laity, which had been suffered to fall into disuse. Sunday trading and Sunday drinking and gaming were prohibited, and offending tradesmen and innkeepers punished. Householders were obliged to send their children and servants to be catechised. Women were ordered to come to be churched the first time they left the house after confinement. All parishioners had to make their communions three times in the year, and attend the services of their own parish church, to bow at the name of Jesus, and uncover their heads during the service. The arm of Laud was long enough to extend even beyond the limits of the island. Chaplains, attached to his majesty's ships and regiments and in the service of trading companies, were obliged to obey the act of uniformity, and use the whole of the services prescribed by the Prayer-book, and none other.

A system such as this, however good the intentions which

prompted it, however wise the care which administered it, could not fail to be extremely unpopular. Religious Puritans hated it, because to them it smacked of popery and the inquisition. The careless, the profane, and the pleasure-loving detested it, because it checked the licence which they were accustomed to give to themselves, and put restraint on their vice and selfishness. Ordinary men disliked it, because it interfered with their usual habits and rebuked their indifference. Only men thoughtful enough to appreciate the value of discipline in the formation of character, and loyal enough to desire the discipline of the Church, were likely to welcome it, and they were but few among the generation then in power. Puritans in England were looking in quite other directions for the training of life. The system of Laud seemed to them a step away from the light, back towards the forsaken regions of error and superstition. Called upon thus peremptorily to shape their lives once more upon the old models, to follow in the wake of seventeen centuries of religious thought, they indignantly refused. Some, rather than submit to a system which they looked upon as reactionary, fled from it into the wilderness, and sought in the new world a place where they could develop their own religious principles for themselves in their own way. Others remained at home and waited till the opportunity should arise when they might erect their own system over the ruins of the vanquished Church.

Unpopularity of his policy.

It is no condemnation to the policy of Laud that it was unpopular. If the Church is doing her duty as a witness to the truth and the guardian of morals she is certain to be unpopular. Popularity with a religion is generally a proof of inefficiency and indifference. But it is a distinct mark of weakness to find that he failed to carry so many of the best and noblest minds with him on the path of reform. It was his unhappy infirmity that he appeared to the world always as the schoolmaster armed with punishments, rather than the leader and champion of a higher system. The bent of his mind, and the peculiarity of his position, naturally led him to constrain rather than to persuade. His appeal was to obedience

Its real weakness.

and duty rather than to enthusiasm and zeal. An unimaginative man, he inspired respect among those who knew him, but rarely love. He lived himself in the grey cold light of intellectual and moral discipline, and knew not how to use the warm and generous zeal to which the heart best responds. And more than that, Laud, like the Puritans, provided no solution for the religious difficulties of the nation. Quick to see the greatness of the Church of England, and to realise her mission in the world, he was slow to recognise the fact that Puritanism was an abiding element in English religious life.

Two incompatible systems of religion were striving for the mastery in England. Each claimed the whole field. Neither would allow standing room for the other. In the reign of Elizabeth the Church had been on the defensive. Puritanism had again and again brought its forces into line and delivered its attack. Every time it had been routed; but it was not till the end of the reign that a counter-attack was made, and the Nonconformists obliged to choose between prison and banishment. For far the larger part of the reign, the question was not whether terms should be given to the Puritans, but whether the Church would be able to maintain herself at all. In the time of Laud the complexion of affairs had quite altered. The Church, fortified by the reaction against Calvinism, and for the moment strengthened by its intimate alliance with the crown, had taken the offensive. It was carrying the war into the enemy's country, and the question at stake was no longer whether the Church would be able to maintain herself at all, but whether she could crush the Puritans altogether. It is possible that the punitive discipline of Laud acting on a nation already half in revolt against the narrowness of Calvinism might have triumphed in the end, had the struggle been fought out simply on religious lines. But he had himself deliberately identified the cause of the Church with the cause of the king. Every act of royal misgovernment weakened the moral appeal of the Church. Every act of ecclesiastical discipline was interpreted by Englishmen in the light of the royal tyranny. Both stood together and both fell together. When

Charles, humbled and impotent, had to meet the Long Parliament of 1640, the victory of Puritanism over the Church was for the time no less assured than the victory of constitutional liberty over prerogative. It was not without significance that Strafford led the way for Laud to the Tower and the scaffold, and that the abolition of the monarchy followed hard upon the suppression of the Church. 'No bishop no king' had been the motto of the royal and ecclesiastical party since the days of the Hampton Court conference, and militant Puritanism took it at its word and overwhelmed both in a common catastrophe in the days of its triumph.

Laud himself was well prepared for his fate. He had ever been lonely and often hopeless, and had fought on bravely more through a sense of duty than the consciousness of power or the hope of success. When the blow fell he received it with self-control and resignation almost stoical in its detachment: 'December 18th, Friday,' he writes in his diary, 'I was accused by the House of Commons for high treason, without any particular charge laid against me. I stayed at Lambeth until the evening to avoid the gazing of the people. I went to evening prayer in my chappel. The Psalms of the day gave me great comfort. God made me worthy of it and fit to receive it. As I went to my barge hundreds of my poor neighbours stood there and prayed for my safety and return to my house, for which I bless God and them.' It is the utterance of a man perfectly resigned and perfectly prepared. During his long imprisonment this calmness of mind never forsook him, though physical strength failed him and he sank back in a swoon as Strafford passed beneath his window on his way to execution, and took his last farewell of his closest friend. Condemned to death like Strafford by legislative act, not by judicial sentence, he was true to the end to the principles which he professed, unswervingly loyal to the Church of England. 'This poor Church of England,' he said on the scaffold when about to die, 'hath flourished and been a shelter to other neighbouring churches when storms fell upon them. I was born and baptized in the bosom of the Church of England. In that

Fall and execution of Laud, 1640-1645.

profession I have ever since lived, and in that I am now come to die.' Faith in the mission of the Church of England, absolute loyalty to her doctrine and her system, were the lights by which Laud steered his course in the world. They are the principles which survived his death. The methods of Laud died with him on Tower hill, his work lived on. And when the Church of England returned to her own at the Restoration, she inherited, as a matter of course, the gift of theological liberty which Laud had bestowed upon her by his life and death. 'Laud was the man,' writes Mr. Gladstone, 'who prevented the English Church from being bound in the fetters of an iron system of compulsory and Calvinistic belief.'

Final triumph of his principles, 1660.

No sooner had the statesmen of the Long Parliament taken the control of national affairs into their hands, than they at once began their attack upon the national Church in the interests of Puritanism. The House of Commons clothed itself with the mantle of the royal supremacy which had fallen from the shoulders of the king, and made itself the supreme judge in ecclesiastical matters. The code of canons which had been passed by Convocation earlier in the year at Laud's instigation was voted illegal in Dec. 1640. A committee was appointed to deal with scandalous ministers, which punished the Laudian clergy for their mode of conducting public worship. In July 1641 the court of High Commission was abolished as unconstitutional, and so passed out of English law the last remnants of the Supreme Head act of 1534. Meanwhile episcopal authority was in abeyance, and from all sides came accounts of the wrecking and pillaging of churches by Puritan mobs. The Separatists, so long under the heel of the law, quickly took advantage of the change. Conventicles sprang up in all quarters of London, largely under the direction of illiterate and fanatical persons. May, the Puritan historian of the Long Parliament, especially remarks upon the 'extreme licence which the common people almost from the very beginning of the Parliament took to themselves of reforming without authority, order, or decency, rudely disturbing church service whilst the

Puritan attacks upon the Church, 1640-1645.

Common Prayer was reading, tearing those books, surplices, and such things which the Parliament did not so far restrain as was desired. To this were added those daily reports of ridiculous conventicles and preachings made by tradesmen and illiterate people of the lowest rank, to the scandal and offence of many.'

In December 1641 twelve of the bishops were committed to prison for having made a protest against the validity of acts of Parliament passed in their absence. On February 13th, 1642, the bishops were excluded by statute from the House of Lords. In April 1643 the Commons at Westminster appointed a committee to destroy painted glass and carved stone work in London churches and streets as monuments of superstition. By the Solemn League and Covenant accepted by the Commons in September 1643, as the price of military assistance from the Scots, episcopacy was abolished, and an undertaking given that the reformation of the Church of England should proceed according to the example of the best reformed churches. The work of reformation was committed to an assembly, partly consisting of English Puritan divines and partly of Scottish presbyterian ministers and partly of laymen, which is known to history from the place of its meeting as the Westminster assembly. It at once proceeded to draw up a book of public worship, a system of church government, a confession of faith, and a catechism. It had completed the first part of its task by the beginning of 1645, and on January 4th the Commons abolished the book of Common Prayer, and made the Directory, as the new book was called, the only legal service-book in England. In March 1646 Parliament accepted its scheme of government, and ordered the establishment of presbyteries all over England, whose business it should be to govern ecclesiastical affairs under the general supervision of Parliament. Finally, in December 1646, the confession of faith and the longer and the shorter Catechisms were presented to the Houses, which contained all the distinctive doctrines of Calvin, and are to this day the autho ised formularies of presbyterian Scotland.

Abolition of episcopacy and the Prayer-book, 1643-1645.

Puritanism had thus succeeded in doing by force what it had failed to do by argument and persuasion. In alliance with the military revolution in favour of the supremacy of Parliament in the state, and supported by the potent army of the Scots, it had at last succeeded in deposing the Catholic Church from being the Church of the nation recognised by the law, and had erected a presbyterian Church in its place. For fifteen years, in the eyes of the law, the religion of England was presbyterian, and the Church of England became, like the Roman Catholic Church, a religious body without legal rights and subject to legal penalties. But many circumstances combined to prevent the full presbyterian system being established in its integrity all over the country. It was by no means popular in England, except in a few places such as London and Lancashire. When it was first imposed by authority in 1646, the war was hardly over, and it could only be established in those parts of the country which were wholly in the hands of the Parliament. By the time that the war had come completely to an end in 1648, the increasing virulence of the attack upon monarchy had driven many of the staunch presbyterians over to the side of the king, and the final triumph of the army in the second civil war was the triumph of independency, and not of presbyterianism. Without having any particular objection to the Directory as a service-book, the lawyers of the Parliament and the independents of the army were determined not to acquiesce in the adoption of the presbyterian system of discipline. As that system had never from the first commended itself to the minds of Englishmen, it very soon became a dead letter, directly it was no longer necessary to purchase the aid of the Scots by its adoption. Thus, although presbyteries were formed in a good many parts of the country, they exercised but little authority in licensing men for the ministry, or in wielding the power of excommunication, and an appeal always lay to Parliament from their decision.

Creation of a presbyterian Church, 1646.

Unpopularity of the presbyterian discipline.

As a matter of fact, except in London and Lancashire, and

perhaps in a few other places, ecclesiastical anarchy reigned. A great number of the Church clergy were dispossessed in 1643, owing to their refusal to take the Covenant, still more were ejected when the use of the Prayer-book was made penal in 1645. Some of the benefices thus vacated were filled by the patrons with presbyterian or independent ministers who had been ordained by the presbyteries, or, in many cases, had not received any form of ordination at all. Some were simply seized by men who made themselves ministers of the vacant parishes without any lawful authority whatever. Many remained vacant for a long time. In some cases the Church clergyman, ousted from his benefice, opened a school in the parish, or was appointed by a friendly squire to be tutor to his family, and thus managed to keep touch with his old congregation and administer to them the sacraments. In many cases the Church clergy were never interfered with at all, and complied with the demands of the law if desired by simply reciting the Church services from memory instead of using the Prayer-book. Ecclesiastical discipline over the clergy was exercised, if it was exercised at all, by the county committees who watched over the interests of the Parliament. They enforced the payment of the fifths, to which sequestrated clergy were entitled out of the benefice by way of provision for their wives and families, and they seem sometimes to have ejected ministers whom they deemed unfit and made fresh appointments, though apparently they had no legal authority at all to do so. Parliament itself retained in its own hands the discipline over the laity, and endeavoured to enforce it in a manner far more strict and inquisitorial than anything of which Laud or the High Commission court had been guilty. Ordinances against stage plays and morrice dancers, as well as against blasphemy, swearing, and adultery, followed each other in quick succession, and did much to make crime synonymous with sin.

Ecclesiastical anarchy, 1646-1654.

The advent of Cromwell to supreme power in the state in 1653 soon worked a change. His orderly mind rebelled against anarchy in all shapes, and his suspicion of the loyalty of the

Church clergy, and his dislike of presbyterian bigotry, led him to pursue a stronger policy. By the Instrument of Government, which established the Protectorate in 1654, and the Humble Petition and Advice which made it hereditary in 1657, independency practically became the religion of England, without the actual abolition of the presbyterian formularies recognised by the law. Contrary to the first principles of presbyterianism, it was expressly provided that all Christians, except papists, prelatists, and antinomians, should receive protection in the exercise of their religion as long as they did not use it for the disturbance of civil order. This established religious toleration in England (within certain limits) as a principle of government, and not merely by way of relief to individuals. But it was a toleration which did not extend to Roman Catholics or to members of the Church of England. They were, in Cromwell's eyes, too deeply committed to wrong principles of religion and politics ever to become good and peaceable citizens, and the only policy possible for a Puritan government to adopt with regard to them was one of stern repression. It is highly significant of the profundity of the gulf between Puritanism and the Church that a man like Cromwell, who had no wish for religious uniformity in the nation, and had a strong personal love for religious toleration, should have found himself compelled to put popery and prelacy on a par with antinomianism, as religions which it was impossible for a Puritan state to recognise.

The policy of Cromwell, 1654-1660.

From the establishment of the Protectorate to the Restoration complete freedom of conscience was permitted to all Protestants who would obey the government. It mattered not to Cromwell whether a minister was, by religious conviction, a presbyterian, or an independent, or a baptist, or a fifth monarchy man, as long as he was obedient to the civil power and a man of real religious and moral life. But upon the clergy of the Church who still remained in England his hand fell with increasing weight. In March 1654 he appointed a committee of thirty-eight persons of approved

Ejection and persecution of the clergy.

Puritan convictions, called the committee of Triers, whose duty it was to inquire into the qualifications of every candidate for a benefice and grant a certificate, should they think fit, permitting him to enter upon his ministry. They were in fact to discharge the duties relating to institution, which in the Church are discharged by the bishop, and in a presbyterian system by the presbyteries. In August of the same year other committees, consisting of from fifteen to thirty persons, were appointed in each county with power to summon incumbents before them and inquire as to their learning and general sufficiency. If they were found guilty of moral offences, or of encouraging dancing or play-acting, or of speaking irreverently of Puritans, or of using the Prayer-book in public service, they were to be ejected. By these committees most of the Church clergy who had succeeded in retaining their benefices were dispossessed. Even the learned Dr. Pococke, perhaps the first Hebrew and Arabic scholar in Europe, was ejected by the Berkshire committee as 'insufficient,' because he still continued to use part of the Prayer-book service. In 1655, during the rule of the major-generals, the Protector issued an edict forbidding any ejected minister from keeping a school, acting as tutor, performing any rite of the Church, or using the book of Common Prayer even privately, under pain of banishment. This cut away the last hope from the Church clergy of being able to maintain themselves. From that time to the Restoration the services of the Church were performed by stealth, as those of the Roman Catholics had been for many years. In 1657, on Christmas Day—a festival peculiarly obnoxious to the Puritans—a congregation, which had assembled for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist in London, was carried off bodily to prison by soldiers. Some of the leading clergy, especially Hammond and Sheldon, who had money of their own, did what they could to support the ruined clergy and to educate candidates for ordination. But in spite of all their efforts there can be little doubt that, if the ascendancy of the army had been maintained unimpaired for a generation after Cromwell's death, the Church of England must have sunk into a small and

insignificant body, largely consisting of exiles out of touch with the national life and tied to the fortunes of a ruined cause.

From this fate the hatred of Englishmen for military rule and the dread of anarchy combined with their love for the Prayer-book to save the nation and the Church. When the king came back to his own in 1660 the Church came back too as a matter of course. No one expected or wanted anything else. There were plenty of questions as to the exact shape which the settlement of religion should take, whether changes should be made in the Prayer-book, what relief should be afforded to tender consciences; but that the religion of England was no longer to be presbyterian or independent, but was to be that of the Church, there was no question at all. When Charles II. was crowned king of England in Westminster abbey, Juxon was there as archbishop of Canterbury to crown him. It required no public act to abolish the various ordinances by which the Church had been superseded and persecuted. In the eye of the law they were unconstitutional acts of a rebel government and had no legal validity. Just as Charles II. returned to what was rightfully his in the twelfth year of his reign, so the Church returned to what was rightfully hers in the eighteenth year of her suppression. According to the theory of the Restoration, all that had intervened had been an illegal usurpation, and could confer no rights. Wren, bishop of Ely, came out of the prison in which he had languished for twenty years. Pearce of Bath and Wells, Skinner of Oxford, Roberts of Bangor, Warner of Rochester, and King of Chichester came forth from their exile or their retreat to resume the government of the dioceses from which they had been driven by force. Frewen, bishop of Lichfield, was placed in charge of the northern province, and Brian Duppa moved from Salisbury to Winchester. The bishops simply resumed their functions as rulers and leaders of religion in England, without waiting for any act on the part of the State to authorise them to do it. Just as there had been no act of the nation

Restoration of the Church, 1660.

reconstituting the Church at the time of the Reformation in the previous century, so there was no act of the nation restoring the Church at the time of the Restoration. The Divine Society had indeed passed through a period of severe crisis. In altering its relations to the papacy it had considerably modified its own teaching and its own worship. It had fallen under the tyranny of the State. It had been conquered and driven into exile by the armed power of Puritanism. But through all these crises its continuity had been carefully preserved. Its law, its organisation, its theory remained essentially unaltered. It had maintained beyond question the due succession of its bishops, and as a necessary consequence the validity of its sacraments. It claimed that in its alterations of teaching and worship it had only brought itself into closer union with the Church of the apostles and fathers. So when the season of persecution passed away and constitutional government once more took the place of military rule, the Church came forth from its hiding-place to discharge the spiritual functions which it had been for a time obliged to suspend, to resume its ancient traditions, to claim its ancient rights, to take up again its solemn duty of guiding the English nation along the way of salvation according to the purpose of God.

The first duty to be performed was to complete the numbers of the episcopate. On October 28th, 1660, five bishops were consecrated at Westminster, including Sheldon to London, Morley to Worcester, and Sanderson to Lincoln. On December 2nd seven others were consecrated in the same place, and on January 6th of the next year four more completed the required number. There was no longer a difficulty, as there had been in the time of Elizabeth, of finding men of sufficient capacity for the office. The Laudian revival had filled the ranks of the clergy with men of learning and devotion. To the practical ability of Sheldon and Morley and the philosophy of Sanderson were added the solid learning of Bryan Walton, the matured wisdom of Reynolds, and the unrivalled liturgical knowledge of Cosin. Seldom have so

Consecration of bishops, 1660-1661.

many men of mark been found together in one company as were gathered on the episcopal bench of England in 1661. But although the Church thus resumed her spiritual position by her own acts, she could not regain her temporal possessions or status without the assistance of the State. Accordingly, by an act of the Convention Parliament of 1660, those of the parish clergy who had been ousted from their benefices by force during the late troubles were restored, to the number it is said of a thousand. In the next year the new Parliament assured the Church in possession of all the property which she had held at the outbreak of the civil war, and replaced the bishops in the House of Lords. So by the summer of 1661 the Church had not only fully resumed the discharge of her spiritual duties, but had been reinstated in possession of her temporalities and her constitutional heritage.

Restoration to the Church of her status and property, 1661.

Restored to the position which she had occupied in the past, the Church was now called upon, in conjunction with the State, to address herself to the difficulties of the future. The great problem which demanded solution was that of the relations between the Puritan bodies and the Church. It was an extremely complicated question. The king, acting on the advice of Clarendon, in the declaration from Breda issued before his restoration, had promised liberty of conscience for all who would submit peaceably to the government. Parliament, however, in the excess of its royalist zeal wished to revive the Elizabethan policy of religious uniformity, and suppress Puritanism by penalties. Puritanism itself was no longer the solid force that it once had been. It had become split up into the two sharply antagonistic bodies of presbyterians and independents, not to speak of the numerous enthusiastic and unorganised sects, of whom the fifth monarchy men and the Quakers were the most conspicuous. It was clearly impossible so to enlarge the boundaries of the Church as to admit all the sects within her pale without destroying not merely the continuity of her existence and of her

Question of her policy towards the Puritans.

Divisions among the Puritans.

claims, but her very framework as a society. There could be no communion between the Quaker who repudiated all sacraments and the churchman who looked upon them as the appointed means of grace; between the Baptist, who considered baptism as the seal of final election, and those who believed it to be the starting-point of Christian life. No teaching society, let alone one which claimed to teach all truth, could authorise its ministers to teach antagonistic schemes of religion and retain its right to teach at all. Practically, therefore, it was only the two organised bodies of presbyterians and independents with which the Church had to deal, and it soon became evident that the two stood on a very different footing. Presbyterianism had acquired a fictitious importance because of the alliance with the Scots, which had been of such vital moment to the Parliament during the civil war. The signing of the Solemn League and Covenant had made it the legal religion of England and given it an official status. But ever since the end of the war its hold over England as a religious system had been steadily relaxing, and most of those who nominally adhered to it did so because it represented something more orderly and more church-like than independency. They were quite willing to accept episcopacy and the Prayer-book, though they did not want to see revived the Laudian discipline and the High Commission court. At the time of the Restoration no cause was less popular than that of the Covenant, and though the most important and most lucrative posts, especially in London, were held by presbyterians, there was but little popular feeling in England in favour of the system which they represented.

Weakness of the presbyterians.

Such was the condition of affairs when Charles II. issued his warrant in March 1661 for the assembling of a conference to discuss the desirability of making changes in the Prayer-book. In obedience to this summons twelve bishops and twelve Puritan ministers met at the house of the bishop of London at the Savoy on the 15th of April, with the archbishop of York in the chair, with the

The Savoy conference, 1661.

view of seeing whether an arrangement between the different interests concerned was possible, and the Puritans were asked to state the alterations which they desired. It at once became evident that they had come to the conference in no spirit of compromise. They had learned nothing and they had forgotten nothing since the Hampton Court conference of 1604. At the Savoy, as at Hampton Court, they demanded the ascendancy of their own opinions, not liberty for tender consciences. They sought from the conference the triumph of Puritanism over the Church, not a footing for Puritanism within the pale of the Church. Baxter, the most vigorous and learned of the Puritan representatives, produced a rival prayer-book of his own making, and demanded its acceptance as an alternative to that of the Church. The others contented themselves with presenting a petition containing the alterations which they required. These included the disuse of the word 'priest,' and of the observance of Lent and Saints' days, permission to use extempore prayer as well as written forms of prayer at the discretion of the minister, to omit the use of the cross in baptism, and the ring in marriage, and to discontinue the practice of kneeling at the reception of Communion. They also objected to the teaching of baptismal regeneration and to making confirmation a necessary preliminary to Communion, and demanded that the ornaments rubric should be abolished, and that no form of ordination should be imposed upon those who had received their mission from the presbyteries. It was obvious that if the Church was to admit Baxter's alternative for the Prayer-book, allow ministers to use at their discretion only such parts of the Prayer-book as they thought fit, abolish all outward expression of the doctrine of the real presence of our Lord in the Eucharist, and cease to teach the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, she would have some difficulty in maintaining her claim to be the Catholic Church in England. This appeared in still stronger light when, just before the close of the conference, three of the Puritan ministers produced a paper in which they

Demand of the Puritans for the creation of a new Church.

asserted that the Church was acting not merely inexpediently but sinfully in requiring the sign of the cross in baptism, the wearing of a surplice, kneeling at the reception of Communion, subscription to the Prayer-book and the Articles, and in declaring baptized infants to be regenerate. When it thus became clear that some of the Puritan ministers considered it sinful to require and teach what the bishops considered it sinful not to require and teach, it was time for the conference to come to an end, and for Englishmen to understand that the systems of religion represented by the Church and Puritanism were too incompatible to be brought into harmony. The conference produced an honest statement by honest persons on both sides of their respective positions, and directly the statements were formulated it became evident that they were irreconcilable.

All that remained for the Church to do was to strengthen its own position and determine on its own policy. When the Savoy conference was over, the Convocations took up the question of the revision of the Prayer-book on their own account. The Convocation of York appointed delegates to sit with the Convocation of Canterbury for the purpose. During the autumn of the year 1661 the work went on apace, and on December 20th the new book received the assent of the Convocations. For two months it remained under the consideration of the king and his government, but at last, on February 25, 1662, it was sent on with the royal approval to the House of Lords, and by them annexed to a bill for uniformity which had been already passed by the Commons. On March 18 the bill with the revised book annexed passed the Lords. On April 16 the Commons accepted the book without alteration, but introduced some amendments into the bill which made it more severe. These were accepted at a conference by the Lords, and on May 19 the act received the royal assent. By it the revised Prayer-book was made the only legal service-book in England. All ministers were obliged to use it and none others in their churches after the feast of S. Bartholomew

Revision of the Prayer-book by Convocation, 1661.

The act of uniformity, 1662.

on the 24th of August, to repudiate the Covenant, and declare it unlawful to take up arms against the king. Those who had not been episcopally ordained were required to seek orders from a bishop before that date. Rather than submit to these terms, some two thousand presbyterian and independent ministers resigned their benefices, and, taking their adherents with them, formed themselves into the first organised bodies of Protestant nonconformists in England, and built and endowed for the purposes of their own worship the first Protestant nonconformist chapels.

The Prayer-book of 1662.

The alterations introduced into the Prayer-book in 1662 were exceedingly numerous, and their general effect was greatly to improve the book from the liturgical point of view as a manual of worship and devotion, and to bring it into closer relation with the ancient services and traditions of the Church. The calendar was much enriched by the addition of most of what are generally known as the black-letter saints' days. A list of the days of fasting and abstinence was inserted. The word 'priest' was substituted for 'minister' or 'pastor' in a number of places, and prayers for the ember seasons, for Parliament, for all conditions of men, and the general thanksgiving, were added. In the service of Holy Communion the commemoration of the departed was put into the prayer for the Church, and the oblation of the elements and the ceremony of the fraction restored, which had been omitted in the revision of 1549. The black rubric on kneeling at Communion, which had been illegally introduced into the Prayer book of 1552 by the council and removed in 1559, was again inserted with the alteration of the words 'real and essential Presence' into 'corporal Presence.' New services required by the altered times were added for the baptism of adults, and for use by those at sea, as well as special services for the 30th of January and the 29th of May. Various rubrical directions were inserted to make the rendering of divine service more orderly and intelligible. But in spite of the numerous changes introduced, amounting it is said to about six hundred, the book remained substantially what it was before. The revisers had no wish to recast the services, still less to draw up a

new scheme of worship. Convocation and Parliament were content with the book which had entwined itself so wonderfully round the hearts of the people, and sought only to strengthen and develop it according to its own principles, and adapt it to the varied needs of the time.

The religious settlement of 1662 was for the Church of England the last act of her Reformation. Ever since the passing of the statute in restraint of the payment of annates in 1532, the Church of England had been in the throes of the struggle produced by the Reformation. That struggle had given birth to two great problems, *i.e.* the relations of the reformed Church to Rome and her relations to Protestantism. Both these questions had been solved, not in detail but in principle, by 1662. The first presented comparatively but slight difficulties. All that was wanted was a plain statement of the controversy on the English side, and in the works of Jewel and Andrewes and Laud and Ussher the case of the English Church was presented with a moderation of language, and illustrated and defended by a wealth of learning which could not be gainsaid. Men might accept it or not as their consciences directed, but from that day to this no one has been able to deny that the position of the Church of England in her controversy with Rome rests upon grounds which require the most serious treatment possible at the hands of her opponents. Intellectually, historically, and morally, she had showed that she could defend herself from attacks which came from that quarter, while the numerical weakness of the Roman Catholics in England made the internal difficulty a serious one only in its connection with schemes of foreign aggression.

The settlement of 1662 the completion of the Reformation.

The relations of the Church of England to Protestantism were not so easily adjusted. Ever since Hooper had refused to be consecrated to the bishopric of Gloucester in 1551 rather than wear a cope and mitre and carry a pastoral staff in his hand, there had been two quite different conceptions of religion struggling for supremacy in England. Those who traced their spiritual descent from the Catholic Church believed that human nature

itself had been redeemed by the Life and Passion of Christ, and each human being rendered capable of being placed in right relations with God by baptism, and of being preserved in a state of grace through sacraments administered within the Church by her duly ordained officers acting in the name and by the authority of her living Lord. Others, deriving their religious opinions from the teaching of Calvin, looked upon human nature as hopelessly vile and corrupt, believed only in the redemption of a few chosen out of the mass for salvation by the individual choice of God, without any action or any merit of their own, who alone were permitted to participate in holy rites and sacraments as pledges and assurances of the favour of God thus wonderfully vouchsafed to them. As we have seen, Puritanism in the days of Elizabeth found its religious strength in this latter conception, and was gradually forced by it to assert itself more and more as the uncompromising enemy of the Church of England. It refused to conform to her ceremonial law and to obey her discipline, it attacked her principle of episcopacy, it tried to supplant her by presbyterianism. As the Church slowly recovered herself from the blow of religious disunion which had so sorely tried her, as under the leadership of Hooker she formulated anew her theology, under the guidance of Andrewes and Laud revived once more her sense of corporate life, and listening to the pleadings of George Herbert, of Nicholas Ferrar, and of Donne, braced herself to contemplate afresh the higher mysteries of the spiritual life according to the traditions of the saints, Puritanism realised more and more its essential antagonism of belief and method to the beliefs and methods of the Church. When its turn came, a true instinct prompted it not merely to overturn the system of the Church, but to rank it with Roman Catholicism as a religious system which it was impossible to tolerate.

Through all the mists and confusion generated by politics, the eye of the historian can see clearly enough that the two systems of religion were ever growing further and further away from each other, as they developed themselves on their own religious

lines by their own religious power from the day of the birth of Puritanism in the reign of Edward VI., to the day of its final exclusion from the national Church in 1662. There never was a time when they were compatible with each other. There was often a time when it seemed that one would completely exterminate the other. By 1662 it was clear that neither comprehension nor extermination was possible, and as the Church was in possession of the field, Puritanism had to go forth into the wilderness. The Reformation struggle was ended. The Church of England reformed on Catholic lines, and, freed from Puritanism, was able to discharge her own duties to her own people in her own way. Puritanism, relieved from its struggle for ascendancy over the Church, was able to develop its principles in the freedom of voluntary societies. For a time, it is true, the toleration which this altered state of affairs demanded was refused by politicians; but in the purely religious sphere the problems of the Reformation were solved at the Restoration.

CHAPTER XVII

THE BEGINNING OF RELIGIOUS TOLERATION

A.D. 1662-1714

THE religious settlement of 1662 implied the continued existence in England of many competing religious bodies. No thinking man could imagine that Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, and Quakers were going to sink into insignificance because Englishmen had rallied round the Church, and acknowledged her claims to their allegiance as a nation. But many years were to elapse before they recognised that the very existence of many competing religious bodies within a nation necessitated a policy of religious toleration. As long as the Puritans were a party within the Church who refused to obey the laws of the Church, and the Roman Catholics were in the minds of most Englishmen a disloyal and unpatriotic clique, it was possible that the national Church might still triumph over all its opponents, and restore to the nation that religious solidarity which it had enjoyed before the Reformation. But after Puritanism had put a king to death and driven the Church into exile for twenty years, after the Roman Catholics had proved their loyalty in a hundred fields, such a result had become clearly impossible. It was ridiculous for half the nation to try and crush the other half out of existence. When the Puritan ministers on S. Bartholomew's Day, 1662, resigned the benefices of the Church which they had held for so many years, because their consciences refused to allow them to accept her doctrine or obey her discipline, how could they be expected to surrender

Toleration the necessary result of the settlement of 1662.

convictions for which they had sacrificed so much? If their religion was to them a thing which they could put on and off at pleasure like a coat, they would not have left their comfortable houses and surrendered their tithes for its sake. It was no more possible that Puritanism should cease to be an abiding factor in English life in 1662 because it had lost religious and political ascendency, than it was that the religion of the Church should cease to exist because of its suppression by Puritanism in 1646.

But if neither form of religion was able to kill the other, if both were to be among the abiding elements of English national life, they must learn to live side by side in peace. Liberty of conscience became a political necessity. It is sometimes thought that the principle of religious toleration, springing in all its attractiveness from enlightened Protestantism, like the goddess of wisdom from the head of Zeus, conquered an abashed and bigoted world by its own moral force. History lends but little aid to such a conception. In England, at any rate, the process was a very different one. The virtues of religious toleration are always readily appreciated by the weaker side, but the party in power is apt to see more clearly the advantages of religious unity as one of the most important elements in the national strength. This truth forced itself more and more into prominence as it became evident that divisions in religion were the chief causes of the terrible wars which devastated Europe for a century after the outbreak of the Reformation. Rulers became strengthened in their belief that disobedience to their religion was sure, sooner or later, to mean disloyalty to their government. James I. and Charles I. certainly felt this with regard to the Puritans. Cromwell, in some respects the most tolerant of men, considered that a Roman Catholic or a Churchman was necessarily an enemy to his rule too dangerous to be tolerated. It was only because statesmen found that religious divisions could not be abolished that they began with a bad grace to endure what they could not cure, and make terms one by one with the most important of the sects. Liberty of worship was allowed long

Genesis of the idea of toleration.

before civil disabilities were removed, and it was not until religious toleration had been practised in England for many years without producing serious misfortunes, that politicians became sensible of its moral beauty. They used it first as a political expedient, and then raised it to the dignity of a moral principle, and congratulated themselves on their enlightenment.

Religious persecution has always been much more an affair of State policy than of religious bigotry,[1] and it is not astonishing to find that Parliament, and especially the House of Commons, took the lead in the work after the Restoration. Partly, no doubt, the Commons were actuated by a spirit of revenge. They had been made to suffer when Puritanism was in the ascendant, and they were determined to make the Puritans suffer now that the tide had turned. But stronger than the desire for revenge was the dread of the danger to the restored constitution of England, if men who were opposed to it in the important matter of religion were allowed to exercise political power. How could men who hated the Church be loyal to a constitution in which Church and State were allied? How could dissenters from the national religion be good citizens? The argument of Cromwell was turned with all its force against his own friends. If a Puritan commonwealth did not dare to tolerate the Churchman because he was likely to be a friend of the monarchy, still less could the monarchy tolerate the Puritan dissenter who had been one of those who had established the commonwealth. In the confusion of the times the vital distinction between the imposition of civil and religious disabilities was forgotten. It was assumed that if a Puritan was permitted to retain his Puritanism he would retain his disloyalty too, and Parliament in its terror and its revenge took blindly up the old weapon of repression which it found ready to its hand.

Causes of the intolerance of Parliament, 1661.

No sooner was the Savoy Conference over than it gave effect to this policy. In December 1661 it began to impose civil

[1] See *Persecution and Tolerance*, by the Bishop of Peterborough.

disabilities upon the Puritans by the passing of the Corporation act, which excluded all nonconformists from municipal office.

Severe acts against nonconformists, 1661-1673.

In the following year, when the bill for uniformity was under consideration, the House of Lords wished to mitigate its severity by giving to the crown a power of dispensing existing ministers from its operation as long as they submitted peaceably to the government, and by giving the ejected ministers a fifth of the income of their benefices by way of pension, but the House of Commons sternly insisted on the excision of these amendments. The act, when it received the royal assent, imposed complete religious disabilities upon all who refused to conform to the Church of England. Like its predecessors in the reigns of Edward VI. and Elizabeth it was a recusancy act as well as an act of uniformity. It compelled all parishioners to attend the services of the Church under penalty of imprisonment, and all holders of benefices to renounce the Covenant, receive episcopal orders, and make a declaration of assent to the book of Common Prayer, and of dissent from the doctrine that it was lawful to bear arms against the sovereign. Two years later, a still more ruthless measure was passed against nonconformist worship. The Conventicle act of 1664 made all assemblies for religious purposes other than those of the Church of England illegal, permitted houses to be searched for suspected conventicles, and imposed the penalty of transportation for repeated offences. But Parliament was not content with this. In 1665, by the Five Mile act, an oath was offered to all nonconformist ministers pledging themselves not to attempt any alteration of government, either in Church or State. If they refused it they were made liable to imprisonment if they came within five miles of any town. Finally, in 1673 the Test act was passed, which compelled all holders of civil, naval, or military office to receive the Holy Communion according to the rites of the Church of England, and make a declaration against transubstantiation.

By the combined effect of these statutes a full system of civil and religious disability was imposed upon all noncon-

formists, equally disgraceful to the Parliament which enacted it and to the Church which welcomed it. Both Roman Catholics and Puritans were forbidden to exercise the rites of their religion, and were prevented from holding any office of responsibility in the army, the navy, the civil service, or in corporations. No one had any right to complain if an episcopal Church demanded that those who held her benefices and received her emoluments should accept her orders and obey her laws. All that could fairly be asked on behalf of the Puritan ministers was that, owing to the exceptional nature of the times, exceptional leniency might be shown in the restoration of discipline. Few in that age would have thought it unreasonable for Parliament to place the national security far above individual rights, and deny political power and responsibility to Puritans whose loyalty it had good reason to doubt. To oblige the ministers of the Church to obey the law of the Church or to leave the Church was one thing: to compel them to leave it and then to persecute them for leaving it was quite another thing. To refuse for a time to the adherents of the Commonwealth posts of trust under the monarchy was at least a defensible if not a magnanimous policy. But for Churchmen to degrade the holiest rite of their religion by making it the stepping-stone to office and emolument was startling indeed. Such a policy was certain to bring at once upon those who were responsible for it the penalties of their sin. The history of the Sacramental Test in England is one of the saddest chapters in the whole of Church history. It kept out only the honest and high minded. It dulled the religious instinct, and lowered irretrievably for generations the whole conception of the Sacraments. It admitted without question—nay, welcomed—the hypocrite, the blasphemer, and the libertine, and made the moral discipline of the Church a very byword of shame. Yet for a hundred and fifty years leading Churchmen, clerical and lay, fought for it as the most precious of their safeguards and the palladium of their faith. No wonder if so mistaken a policy brought its own retribution in

Their harmful character.

the deadening of spiritual life, and contributed to the loss of half the English-speaking races to the allegiance of the Church.

In the reign of Charles II. the religious evils of the system were obscured in the minds of most men by its political advantages. Historians have been apt to lay too little stress on the dread of a return to military rule, and the fear of the establishment of Roman Catholicism, as the dominant factors in English affairs during that period. The growing influence of Louis XIV. in Europe, his evident determination to pursue an aggressive policy in the joint interests of his glory and his religion, the close and sinister relations maintained between him and Charles, the acknowledged conversion of the duke of York, the threatened extinction of the Dutch by the two kings in 1672 inflamed the imagination of Englishmen, reminded them of Philip II. and the Spanish armada, and made English Churchmen tremble for their independence. It was this spectre which stood in the way of any mitigation of the penal laws. Charles, to do him justice, desired toleration in the interests of the Puritan as well as of the Roman Catholic nonconformists. He wished that a special dispensing power should be vested in the crown by the act of uniformity to relieve individual cases. He issued a declaration claiming a general dispensing power in 1662, and promising to use it in favour of the Puritans. He asked Parliament in 1667 to pass a measure of relief. Finally, in 1672, he issued his famous declaration of indulgence, which suspended all the penalties attaching to all nonconformists, and permitted mass to be said in private houses. But all these efforts failed in the presence of the stern opposition of Parliament, which was convinced that toleration for the Puritans was only put forward as a stalking-horse to draw away attention from the advances of Roman Catholicism. The declaration of indulgence was declared illegal, and the Test act was the answer of the nation to the policy which prompted it. Charles was wise or timid enough to draw back and not attempt any more to stem the passions of the multitude. The horrors of the popish plot, and

Political difficulties in the way of toleration.

the mad fury of the struggle about the exclusion bill, were sufficient to estrange him from all sympathy with the Puritans, and to prove to him that for the present the Roman Catholics must be left to their fate. Determined not to go again on his travels, he turned for support during the rest of his reign to the militant Churchmen, and in return for their doctrine of passive obedience cynically surrendered the nonconformists to the operation of the penal laws.

Determination of James II. to establish Roman Catholicism, 1685-1688.

While the unscrupulous and easy-going Charles was on the throne the danger of the establishment of Roman Catholicism in England was much less serious than Protestant England imagined. With the accession of the single-minded and obstinate James, it became instant and menacing. To him the establishment of Roman Catholicism appeared the first of religious duties, the vindication of the authority of the crown from Parliamentary control the noblest of political causes. To achieve these two objects he was willing to go all lengths and run all risks. Misled by the exaggerated and fulsome utterances of the clergy, he persuaded himself that the doctrine of passive obedience was so ingrained into the very texture of the English Church that opposition to the king from that quarter was impossible. The philosophical speculations of the schools of Hobbes and Filmer, starting from directly opposite poles of thought, united in support of absolutism, and prepared men's minds for the revival of kingly authority. The defeat of the exclusion bill in 1680, the rout of the opposition to the court after the discovery of the Rye House plot in 1683, and the ease with which the country had acquiesced in the practical absolutism of the last years of the reign of Charles, all served to confirm James in his opinion. Convinced that the time had come when a bold policy would be crowned with success, he turned a deaf ear to the politic remonstrances of Louis XIV. and even of the pope, and struck out gallantly, if wildly, for the interests, as he conceived them, of his religion and his crown.

His first effort was directed against the Test act. Claiming

that the power to dispense with penal acts of Parliament in individual cases was inherent in the royal prerogative, he appointed several Roman Catholics to be officers in the army during the rebellion of Monmouth in the summer of 1685, and dispensed them from complying with the test. When Parliament met, in November, it began under the leadership of Compton, bishop of London, to remonstrate against a doctrine which, if substantiated, made the crown completely superior to the law. James brought the question before the courts. Chief-Justice Herbert decided in favour of the crown, as he had previously arranged with the king to do, and James hastened to exercise the power which the judges had given him. Roman Catholics were appointed to be officers in the army and navy, and to sit on the judicial bench, and at the table of the Privy Council. The Jesuits, Benedictines, and Franciscans were given establishments in London, and mass, according to the Roman rite, was once more said openly in public chapels. This policy, directed quite as much against constitutional liberty as against religious intolerance, at once aroused the old hatred of Rome as the enemy of the national liberty and the national religion. The revocation of the edict of Nantes and the terrible persecutions of the Huguenots in France served as object lessons to Englishmen of what would infallibly happen to them should James have his way. All eyes were turned to the Church of England for leadership in so great a crisis; and once more, as in the days of John, she stepped boldly to the front to withstand the tyrant in the sacred name of liberty.

His use of the dispensing power.

James at once recognised his true foe, and tried to crush her before she was able to organise her opposition. In July 1686 he nominated, by virtue of his ecclesiastical supremacy, a court of High Commission, and invested it with powers closely analogous to those which Cromwell had exercised as the vicar general of Henry VIII. By this unconstitutional tribunal, Compton, bishop of London, who had taken the lead in opposing the dispensing power, was suspended for trivial causes. As the universities

His revival of a High Commission court, 1686.

were the strongholds of the Church and the training ground of the clergy, the king next turned his attention to them. The master and two fellows of University College, Oxford, who had become Roman Catholics, received dispensations to hold their offices. A layman was made dean of Christ Church by special dispensation. The university of Cambridge was ordered to give the degree of M.A. to a Benedictine monk in spite of the law, and on the refusal of the vice-chancellor to obey he was deprived of his office by the king. Just at this time the president of Magdalen College, Oxford, died, and James ordered the fellows to elect one, Farmer, who was ineligible by the statutes of the College. The fellows accordingly refused, and chose one of their number named Hough. James thereupon had Hough's election annulled by his High Commission court, but, dropping the candidature of Farmer, ordered the election of Parker, bishop of Oxford. The College answered that Hough was duly elected according to their statutes, and that there was no vacancy to which to elect Parker, whereupon the king paid a personal visit to the College, rated the fellows for their disobedience, and procured the expulsion of Hough and five-and twenty of the fellows, whose places he filled with Roman Catholics. On the death of Parker, early in 1688, James appointed a Roman Catholic bishop to be president.

His attack on the universities, 1687.

Arbitrary and illegal measures such as these strained the relations of James to the Church almost to breaking. It was clear that the king was embarked upon the deliberate policy of establishing Roman Catholicism on the ruins of the Church of England. Yet Churchmen kept singularly calm, and no act of disloyalty could be attributed to them. Bishops of weight and influence, like the saintly Ken and the learned Frampton, preached to vast congregations on the Roman controversy. Sancroft, archbishop of Canterbury, refused to have anything to do with the High Commission court. But, true to their principle of passive obedience, they made no overt act of resistance. James mistook their quietness for cowardice, and prepared for his master-

stroke. He determined to unite Roman Catholic and Protestant nonconformists together under the banner of liberty of conscience against the Church, and make the Church herself assist in her own defeat by the use of his ecclesiastical supremacy. In April 1687 James had issued a declaration of indulgence, in which he declared the penal acts against all nonconformists suspended by virtue of his royal prerogative. This declaration he now determined to republish, and make the clergy of the Church of England all over the country read it from the pulpit. On May 4th, 1688, appeared an order of Council commanding the bishops to cause the declaration to be read in every church of their dioceses on the last two Sundays of the month.

His order to the clergy to read the declaration of indulgence, 1688.

Sancroft at once summoned a meeting of the bishops and the leading London clergy and laity to discuss the matter. On the 12th of May the conference met at Lambeth. Owing to the shortness of the notice, none of the bishops of the more distant sees were able to come in those days of slow and dangerous travelling. But among the famous seven who responded to the call were some of the most honoured names in the English Church. Sancroft of Canterbury, White of Peterborough, Lloyd of S. Asaph, Turner of Ely, Lake of Chichester, Ken of Bath and Wells, and Trelawney of Bristol, formed a body unquestionably representative of the English episcopate. They were assisted in their consultations by Compton, bishop of London, by Tillotson, dean of Canterbury, Stillingfleet, dean of S. Paul's, the earl of Clarendon, and others. The gravity of the crisis was fully recognised. The discussions lasted for a whole week. Legal advice was sought, and in the end the action to be taken was unanimously approved. The seven bishops determined to present a petition to the king which should state their averseness to the distributing and publishing the declaration on the ground that it was founded on a dispensing power such as had twice been declared to be illegal by Parliament, and ask that they might be relieved from the order to publish it. On the 18th they presented the petition. On the next

Refusal of the bishops.

day the whole city knew what had taken place, and only four incumbents were found in all London subservient enough to read the declaration on the Sunday following. When the dean of Westminster began to read it in the abbey the congregation left the building. Tidings of the stubbornness of London travelled like wildfire over the provinces, and by the time the month was over not more than two hundred churches in the whole of England had echoed back the abortive declaration from their emptied aisles.

For all practical purposes the clergy and laity of the Church of England stood solid behind the bishops in defence of the national liberty, but the infatuated king refused to recognise the fact, and determined to punish the bishops for their contumacy. On the 8th of June they were summoned before the council, and ordered to enter into recognisances for their trial on a charge of publishing a seditious libel. On their refusal they were committed to the Tower. Their passage to their prison was a triumphal procession. Never since the days of the Crusades had the solid natures of Englishmen been so deeply moved. As their barge passed swiftly down the Thames hundreds of sober citizens assembled on the river banks, and, kneeling in the black mud, craved their blessing and thanked God for their courage. On the 29th their trial began. The judges were divided in opinion whether the petition could be in law a libel or not. The jury, unable to agree, were locked up for the whole of the night. At ten o'clock in the morning they came into court and gave their verdict—Not Guilty. In a moment broke out a scene of wild excitement unparalleled in the history of English courts of law. The crowd within and without Westminster hall broke into a frenzy of enthusiastic joy. Men fell upon each others' necks, and wept and shouted and laughed and wept again; and amid the cheers of men and the boom of cannon the humble heroes of the Church passed in safety to their homes.

Trial of the seven bishops.

The failure of the attack upon the Church was the death-blow to the rule of James II. It proved that however passionate, even servile, the loyalty of Englishmen could be, it would not be

suffered for one moment to stand in the way of duty and patriotism. It showed no less clearly that a sovereign who was determined to trample the laws of England under his feet could no longer be entrusted with the conduct of affairs. With the exception of the restoration of Charles II. no movement in English history was so national as the expulsion of James II. In three short years he had alienated every class in the country except the Roman Catholics. Whig and Tory, Churchman and Protestant nonconformist, city merchant and country squire, were all united in the defence of their common liberties. When the crisis came, and the prince of Orange landed at Torbay in November 1688, not a hand was raised to check his triumphal march. The difficulties arose after James had fled. Many Churchmen, Tory in their politics, and still possessed by a devoted attachment to the house of Stuart and the principle of hereditary right, were unwilling to transfer the crown from the head of James to that of William. Others, Whig in their politics and more latitudinarian in their religion, welcomed the opportunity of asserting their belief in the elective character of English kingship. The Protestant nonconformists looked forward to a revision of the Church formularies under the auspices of a Calvinistic king favourable to their interests. The Revolution was the act of the whole nation, but the bestowal of the crown upon William and Mary was that of the Whigs and a section of the Tories. The bulk of the Tory clergy and squires strongly disliked it, and some of the staunchest and best of the Tory clergy found it impossible conscientiously to accept it. So it happened in the irony of events that the Church, which had done the most to save the nation in the hour of its peril, suffered the most in the hour of its deliverance.

The Revolution of 1688.

One question, however, received its true solution. The religious disabilities of the Protestant nonconformists clearly could no longer be maintained by a government headed by a Calvinistic king, and largely supported and dependent upon nonconformist votes. William himself, ignorant of the history of the Church and careless of her claims, was anxious to try once more

to bring Churchman and Puritan together in one religious organisation. Without consulting the Church at all he caused a comprehension bill to be introduced into Parliament, which would have imposed a new Prayer-book upon the Church by the authority of the State alone, in a manner worthy of the worst times of Edward VI. But the House of Commons refused to discuss the bill until it had received the sanction of Convocation in the constitutional manner. When Convocation met in November 1689, it showed so strong a feeling against anything which savoured of Puritanism, that the government thought it useless to lay the proposed Prayer-book before them at all, and the subject was quietly dropped. Comprehension of different religious systems in one Church had again proved an impossibility, but men were ready now to learn the lesson which they had refused to learn so often before, and toleration of different religious systems in the same nation was accepted without a question. By the Toleration act of 1689 all Protestant Trinitarian nonconformists were allowed the free use of their religion, provided that their religious meetings were open to the public, and their ministers subscribed those of the thirty-nine Articles which did not deal with the distinctive doctrine and organisation of the Church.

The Comprehension bill, 1689.

The Toleration act, 1689.

The Toleration act marks the beginning of religious toleration in England. It was by no means a perfect measure. It did not attempt to touch the question of civil disabilities at all. Nonconformists remained incapable of holding offices under government, or becoming members of a corporation. The Test and Corporation acts were not interfered with. Even in removing religious disabilities the act was far from complete. Roman Catholics, Unitarians, and Jews were not affected by it. Nevertheless, the passing of the act is a great epoch in the religious history of England. It is at once the Great Charter of religious freedom, and the triumph of common sense. The Church revival of the days of James I. and Charles I. had determined once for

Settlement of the difficulty of religious division.

all that the Church of England in her reformation had no intention of surrendering her Catholic traditions or compromising her historical claims. The Puritan movement, in its forcible suppression of the Church, had demonstrated clearly enough that its differences with the Church were fundamental. The day of S. Bartholomew, 1662, published the fact to the world in unmistakable characters, and the Toleration act of 1689 set its seal to its reality. The most important religious systems of England —those of the Baptists, the Quakers, the Independents, the Presbyterians, and the Church—recognised that, as they could not have England to themselves, they must be prepared to share it with their neighbours. Religious division was acknowledged to be an evil in the national life which was permanent and had to be faced. Religious toleration not only supplied the necessary key to the puzzle, but appealed to the conscience with a moral force of its own. Soon it took rank as an axiom of political morality, and became gradually recognised as one of the fundamental rights of English subjects.

Anarchical condition of religion in England, 1662.

The activity of the Church of England was by no means exhausted in the endeavour to secure religious uniformity, or by the sharpness of her contest with aggressive Roman Catholicism. Her internal affairs required just as much attention as her external relations, and even more of the tact of statesmanship. It is difficult to exaggerate the effect of the overthrow of the Church and the triumph of Puritanism in the middle of the century upon the thought, the habits, and the traditions of religious England. Ever since the accession of Edward VI. the religious opinions of Englishmen, the services in the churches, the teaching in the pulpit, had all been subject to the most violent perturbations. Movement had succeeded movement, and reaction followed quick on reaction. The Erastianism and spoliation of the reign of Edward VI., the fanatical and revengeful Roman Catholicism of Mary, the foreign and aggressive Puritanism under Elizabeth, the busy, brief, and unpopular reconstruction under Laud, ending in the catastrophe of the civil war and the religious anarchy of the

Commonwealth, had swept men from their accustomed foothold, and left them floundering in a sea of distraction. Old habits were broken, old traditions lost, old beliefs shaken. Each new wave of thought became broken and spent and superseded, before it had had time to establish itself. Religious England in the time of the Commonwealth was like a defeated army. Soldiers of the Cross there were, numerous, brave, and noble-spirited as ever; but imperfectly armed, overwhelmed with confusion, without discipline, without leader, without organisation; a mob of unmanageable units, each doing what he thought right in his own eyes.

Strength of Church principles.

The deep and strong reality of the Church revival saved England in this crisis of her fate. It produced a philosophical and intelligible system of theology which agreed with the facts of history and satisfied the reason. It appealed also to the spiritual nature of man, and called forth his powers of devotion. It gave to England a learned and a spiritual clergy, and provided them with a scientific theology and practice. The Puritan domination tested its reality, and the Church came forth from the ordeal in triumph. Taught in the school of adversity, the leading Churchmen of the Restoration acquired a solid grip upon their faith, and a fearlessness and simplicity in witnessing for their convictions, which is often wanting in easier times. Two great gifts remained over to the English Church from the teaching of Andrewes and Laud, and the troubles which followed. One was the conviction of the value and beauty of the Prayer-book. When English Churchmen were deprived of the Prayer-book they realised its true worth, and understood to the full for the first time what the Prayer-book religion of Andrewes and George Herbert and Laud really was. It became, as their enemies expressed it, their idol, for it was indeed to them next to the Bible the truest expression of God. Never has the full teaching of the Prayer-book sunk so simply into the religious life of England and leavened it as it did in the half-century following the Restoration. The other was the value of episcopacy. After a king had laid down his life rather than set his hand to its

Value attached to the Prayer-book and episcopacy.

abolition, episcopacy naturally acquired an unique position in the minds of all Churchmen. They could no longer consider it in any way an open question. Though only High Churchmen believed that the episcopate was a necessity of true Church life, and that where there is no bishop there is no Catholic Church, yet Broad Churchmen and Low Churchmen have been equally zealous in its support. Since the Restoration, the proposal for the abolition of episcopacy, so strenuously urged by so many different classes of men in the Church in the earlier part of the century, has never been renewed, and the tendency has rather been for nonconformists to use the title though not to adopt the institution.

Restoration of the Church system;

The historical episcopate and the revised Prayer-book thus became the centres round which the disturbed elements of religious life in England quickly gathered. Many of the clergy who were replaced in their livings or appointed to vacancies, many of the landowners who returned to their estates or had retained them by composition, were zealous Churchmen and disciples of Laud, although some of them might have bowed themselves in the house of Rimmon in the evil days. In such parishes the full system of the Church was at once restored, even before the act of Uniformity was passed. Surplices reappeared in church, the clergy once more walked about the streets in gown and cassock and square cap. The altars were moved to the east end of the chancel, and railed in. The cathedrals were purified from the state of neglect in which they had lain during the Commonwealth. The walls were repaired, the signs of wanton destruction and desecration as far as possible removed, the choir once more resounded daily to the tones of the organ and the voices of the choristers; and in some places, such as Durham, the copes were worn, the candles lighted, and the incense swung at the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. Everywhere was called forth by the circumstances of the time a great enthusiasm for church restoration, and the liberality of Churchmen responded nobly to the call. Sheldon, when bishop of London, began at once the repair

and of the fabrics.

of S. Paul's, the choir of which had been turned into cavalry barracks, and it is stated that during the eighteen years which remained to him of life, he spent upon public works between sixty and seventy thousand pounds. The Sheldonian theatre, and the restored chapel of his own college of All Souls at Oxford, bear witness to a splendid munificence. Hacket, bishop of Lichfield, collected money sufficient to rebuild his cathedral, which had been practically a ruin since the siege of Lichfield in the civil war. Seth Ward, bishop of Exeter, raised and spent some £25,000 on the cathedral, and rescued it from the vilest uses. Of the repairs of parish churches there are naturally fewer notices, but the names of lord Digby, dean Aldrich, Dr. Busby, Mr. Chetwynd, and Mr. Marshall, are mentioned in the chronicles of the time as builders of new churches out of their private pockets, irrespective altogether of the London churches which were built after the great fire, and paid for partly by public funds and partly by private subscription. Add to all this the innumerable smaller reparations which must have been required in the fabrics of the parish churches, of which no records exist, and of the large amount of money required to be spent upon church fittings and furniture—altar-cloths, altar-vessels and linen, altar-candlesticks, surplices, cassocks, Bibles, prayer-books—in fact, for all things necessary for the orderly worship of the Church, to say nothing of its dignity and grandeur, it is evident that the aggregate sum expended by Churchmen by voluntary gift to repair the ravages of the civil war and the Puritan domination must have been exceedingly large. When we remember that this sum was mainly provided by men who had been for many years struggling under exceptional taxation at home, or starving in exile abroad, we cannot fail to recognise a strong love for the Church and deep thankfulness for her restoration as the true motives of self sacrifices so real and so noble. Like the widow in the gospel, they gave not of their superfluity but of their necessity.

The same strong love for the Church and appreciation of her system is seen quite as much in the building up of the spiritual as it is in that of the material fabric. It is too often supposed

because the court of Charles II. was vile, and literature and the stage profligate, that English society as a whole was corrupt and irreligious in the years which followed the Restoration. It is said that the reaction against Puritanism was so strong as to sweep every one to the opposite extreme, and that debauchery became the proof of loyalty, and was justified as being more honest than hypocrisy. The Church is pictured as acquiescing in this degrading state of affairs, and content to leave the exercise of practical piety to John Bunyan and the nonconformists as long as she was able to retain position, power, and wealth. Such a picture is a gross caricature. No doubt there was a natural and undue reaction against the severity of Puritan manners, a tendency all over the country to make

Exaggerated idea of the profligacy of the time.

> 'Strict age and sour severity
> With their grave saws in slumber lie,'

which showed itself in its most conspicuous form among the young bloods about town and at the universities. No doubt a certain section of society, following the infamous example of the court, cast all restraints behind them, and lived a life of open and notorious debauchery. This, however, was mainly due to French influence. It was a poisonous exotic transplanted to English soil, a memory of the orgies of the Valois kings, brought over by Charles and his personal friends from their exile. It only affected the court, and society within the influence of the court. That was the society to which literature and the stage appealed for patronage; consequently, they reflected its tone and imitated its licence.

But outside the range, and even within the range, of the court itself, was another society of pure-minded, God-fearing men and women who formed the backbone of the nation, and, for the most part, modelled their inner life upon the system and the teaching of the Church. The names of Clarendon and his children, John Evelyn, Sir C. Wren, Lord Dartmouth, Robert Boyle,

High standard of spiritual life in society.

Robert Nelson, Lady Pakington, Lady Russell, Lady Warwick, Mrs. Godolphin, and Lady Margaret Maynard, are sufficient to show that even in London society there were many of the laity who lived not merely good but strict and devout lives during the worst period of court excess, and every one of them was an intelligent and faithful child of the Church. They used Cosin's *Devotions*, or *The Whole Duty of Man*, or Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Living and Dying*, as their guides to the spiritual life. They observed the fasts and festivals of the Church. They received the Holy Communion frequently, and prepared for its reception with great care. They seem to have gone to confession regularly and naturally.[1] As far as possible they attended the daily service of the Church. Among the dignified clergy the high tone of religious life was even more marked. If Sheldon was considered by some to be too political, and Seth Ward too jovial a prelate, in Cosin, Gunning, Jeremy Taylor, Barnabas Oley, Isaac Barrow, Sancroft, Ken, and Kettlewell, the Church produced types of Christian character of infinite variety, but all agreeing in this that they would be satisfied with no standard short of perfection. The Caroline divines have become almost a proverb for the extent and profundity of their learning. Cosin, Bull, Pearson, South, and Stillingfleet are sufficient of themselves to witness to its truth. While the claims of theology and homiletics received ample justice at their hands, the little band of Platonists at Cambridge decorated the Church and the university with the laurel leaves of a graceful and spiritual philosophy. On whatever side we look of the national religion — intellectual, devotional, practical—we cannot fail to be struck with the abiding signs of life everywhere present. Where life is active and vigorous in the Church, morality cannot be low or the conscience dull. If the worst men and women in England

And among the clergy.

[1] It would be interesting to know when and why this habit of going to confession dropped into desuetude. Before the Restoration, as well as after, the habitual use of confession seems to have been usual among those who were trying to lead religious lives. Jeremy Taylor, we know, acted as confessor to Evelyn, Bishop Gunning to Mrs. Godolphin, bishop Morley to the duchess of York, and archbishop Sharp to Queen Anne.

were to be found among the nominal adherents of the Church, the best were produced by her own inherent vitality, and it ought to be remembered that the true verdict upon religious effort must always be determined by the best which the system produces, and not by the worst which it tolerates.

Latent Puritanism in many parts of the country.

But if the Church of the Restoration produced in its highest development some of the most beautiful characters in the whole range of Church history, it also contained within itself the seeds of its own decay. The clergy and laity who had emerged from the darkness of oppression, purified by the trial through which they had passed, did not form a majority of the nation. Where the Church system was allowed to have full scope, it proved once more to the ever-incredulous world its unique power in training souls to perfection. It has been the special privilege of the English Church, that those who have freely surrendered themselves to her highest teaching have acquired therefrom a combination of graces, and a wholesome robustness of character, often wanting in those trained under more authoritative systems. Saintly souls, such as these, must always be few. It is not everybody who is prepared to make the complete surrender of self, which is the necessary entrance on the path of perfection. But in the England of the Restoration about half the clergy and the majority of the laity had no desire to surrender themselves to the Church system at all. After the religious anarchy of the Commonwealth and the military rule of Cromwell, they were quite willing to accept the return of the Church. They looked upon the Church, as they did upon the monarchy, as a great security for law and order, but they had no personal love for her system, or intellectual enthusiasm for her doctrine. To them the Prayer-book was an official service-book to which they had no conscientious objection, not in its essence the devotional expression of sixteen centuries of Catholic thought; the Church was merely the form of Christianity which the nation had chosen to adopt, not the common mother of all the faithful, here and in eternity.

The generation which had grown up under the Puritan domination had imbibed much Puritan dislike of historical Christianity, and had moulded its religion on Puritan models. It did not change its religious beliefs and habits because it conformed to the act of uniformity, and used the Prayer-book instead of the Directory. It was really in closer sympathy with the nonconformists outside the Church, than with the bishops who were its nominal leaders. It was with great difficulty that the bishops could procure the observance of even a minimum of Church order in the services, and of care for the fabrics, of the Church, over large tracts of country and especially in the more Puritan districts. In 1677 Evelyn reports that in Suffolk 'most of the houses of God in this county resemble rather stables and thatched cottages than temples in which to serve the Most High.' In 1686 the state of things in Sussex was quite as bad. In 1697, in the diocese of Lincoln, the bishop complains that 'some chancels lie wholly disused in more nasty manner than any cottager would keep his house.' From Ken's Visitation Articles, issued in 1684, we gather that at that time, in the diocese of Bath and Wells, there were still churches where the surplice was not used, where the altar still stood without cover or rail in the body of the church, where there was no chalice, no Prayer-book, or authorised version of the Scriptures. In the diocese of Hereford, bishop Croft, in 1675, did not think it 'wise to be zealous for the surplice.' Similar carelessness prevailed with regard to the services. Baptism was usually ministered in private houses, not in church. Celebrations of the Holy Eucharist were lamentably few. Even in 1714, in the full swing of the renewed Church life of the reign of Anne, there were only twelve churches in all London where there was a weekly Celebration. In the earlier part of the reign of Charles II., the common practice seems to have been to celebrate the Holy Eucharist only three or four times in the year. But as a new generation grew up under Church influence Celebrations became more frequent, and by the end of the reign it was usual that in cathedrals and in all town parishes there should

Slow growth of Church order and feeling.

be a Celebration every month. No doubt the explanation of this great defect in the Church is partly to be found in the fact that owing to the Puritan teaching on the sacraments, and the cessation of public confirmation for twenty years, the numbers of possible communicants in a country parish were exceedingly few for some years after the Restoration. But it none the less shows that the sacramental teaching of a great number of the clergy left much to be desired.

Division of Churchmen into the Latitudinarian and High Church parties.

Thus to some extent the division which had stereotyped itself in the nation by the permanent withdrawal of the Protestant nonconformists from the pale of the national Church appeared also within the bounds of the Church itself. Side by side with the intelligent and devoted Churchmanship, which was conspicuous among so many of the leading spirits in Church and State, was found a type of religion, individualistic in its basis, uninterested in the historical claims of the Church, and somewhat resentful of her discipline. Those who adopted it found themselves out of sympathy with the sacramental teaching of the Church and with the spirit of the Prayer-book, but often were not sufficiently distinctive in their own theology to be unable or unwilling to use the authorised formularies. They were equally opposed to the tendency, visible in some quarters among the Puritans, to insist upon the consciousness of the direct work of the Holy Spirit upon the individual soul as the sum and substance of all true religion. This vein of mysticism was especially strong among the Baptists and the Quakers, and tended, if exaggerated, to degenerate into pure fanaticism, and to substitute emotion for conviction. To the Latitudinarians, as they were called, Protestant mysticism was as hateful as High Church sacerdotalism. They sought to overcome both by insisting on the supremacy of reason in faith as well as practice, and denouncing enthusiasm. Thus the reaction against Puritan dogmatism, which developed in some quarters zeal for Catholic doctrine and practice, led in others to indefiniteness in belief and indifference to system. The more aggressive articles of Calvinistic as of Church teaching

were dropped out of sight, and the morality common to all forms of Christianity insisted upon as the essence of true religion. Enlightenment, refinement, decorousness of life, became the tests of religious influence rather than faith, love, and self-sacrifice. The Church system was deprecated because it produced enthusiasm and might foster superstition. It induced people to believe and to do more than was necessary. Christianity was recommended, not because it was true, but because it was the religion of the civilised world. Among the presbyterians, who had always been the strictest of the Puritans in both doctrine and discipline, indefiniteness of belief grew so rapidly that by the end of the century they were as a body losing faith even in the Divinity of Christ. So far had the process of disintegration advanced in the reign of George I., that most of the presbyterian endowments raised under Charles II. had already passed into unitarian hands.

Within the pale of the Church of England this tendency of thought received an immense impetus from politics. The Catholic Churchmen, as we have seen, identified themselves closely with the monarchy in the reign of Charles II., maintained strongly the doctrine of hereditary right in the crown, and took a leading part in throwing out the exclusion bill. Those, therefore, opposed to the High Churchmen in religion, opposed themselves to them in politics too. They formed a distinct school of their own within the Church, became known as the Latitudinarian party in religion, and formed part of the Whig party in politics. They supported as their distinctive political principle the magisterial view of kingship as against the High Church and Tory view of hereditary or even divine right. The flight of James II. in 1688, and the questions to which it gave rise, intensified the growing hostility between the two parties. The best of the bishops and clergy, and most of the country squires, were strong Tories, and objected strenuously to the proposal that Parliament should exercise the power of transferring the crown from the head of James to that of William. But every suggestion which they made showed the more clearly that the Whig policy was the

Influence of politics upon Church parties.

only one possible under the circumstances. They had to accept the inevitable with the best grace that they could, if their consciences permitted them to do so.

The non-jurors, 1689.

Unfortunately archbishop Sancroft and eight other bishops, with about four hundred of the clergy and some of the most distinguished of the laity, took the somewhat narrow view that as they had taken an oath of allegiance to James II., from which he had not dispensed them, they could not conscientiously take an oath of allegiance to another sovereign. The point was purely a technical one of conscience, like that which prevented Fisher and More from taking the succession oath in 1535. A wise and tolerant government would have seen that it was eminently a case for gentle treatment. Many of the nonjurors were old and failing in health. Three of the bishops, as it was, died before they were ousted from their sees. All that was required was a little special supervision of a few of the hot-headed of the clergy for a few years, and the Church of England would have been saved from a very serious blow. But other counsels prevailed. The Whigs, who were in the ascendant, could not resist the opportunity of dealing a shrewd blow at the leaders of the High Church party. They would concede nothing even to those who, like Sancroft, Ken, and Lake, had boldly withstood the tyrant in his power, and done more than any one to pave the way for the revolution. The oaths were tendered and refused. Six bishops—Sancroft, archbishop of Canterbury, Ken of Bath and Wells, Frampton of Gloucester, Turner of Ely, Lloyd of Norwich, and White of Peterborough; about four hundred of the clergy, including George Hickes and John Kettlewell, Charles Leslie and Jeremy Collier; and many of the laity, among whom were Henry Dodwell and Robert Nelson, went forth of their own accord into the cold shade of neglect, and even of want, rather than do violence to their consciences. After their expulsion they were, on the whole, treated with great consideration, but the evil was done. When once in opposition to constituted authority the more zealous among them naturally took the lead. They

persuaded themselves that the Church of England had fatally compromised herself with schism by acknowledging the bishops and clergy who had been intruded into their places, and that they alone constituted the true Catholic Church in England. After the death of Sancroft, contrary to the wishes of Ken and Frampton, they consecrated bishops to maintain the succession, and drew up a revised liturgy. Thus the schism lasted long after its original causes had passed away, and (anachronism though it seems) when the battle of Trafalgar was fought the last nonjuring bishop had but lately passed to his rest.

Loss to the Church by their expulsion.

The loss which the Church of England sustained from the expulsion of the nonjurors cannot be measured by numbers. Among them were the very best of the English clergy and laity. At no time could the gentle steadfastness of Ken, the vigour of Frampton, the scholarly grace of Leslie, the devotion of Nelson, the research of Johnson, or the multifarious learning of Dodwell be easily spared. At a time when the forces of irreligion were gathering themselves together for an attack on the fundamental truths of the Christian religion, to expel such men from the Church was to play into the hands of the adversary. Yet this was not the worst. Irreligion was an open enemy, and could be recognised; party spirit was a more insidious foe, which clothed itself in the garb of an angel of light. No one could reasonably have complained if the victory of Whig principles at the Revolution had borne its natural fruit in the promotion of Whig Latitudinarian clergy to important posts in the Church. No fair-minded man could have grudged Burnet and Tillotson and Tenison their promotion, or found much serious fault with any of the episcopal appointments of the reign. But the expulsion of the nonjurors was regarded by many as a declaration of war against Tory High Churchmen. Every one knew that the bulk of the Tory party held principles identical with those of the nonjurors, though they did not push them to so exaggerated a length. To punish the nonjurors was to declare hostility to those principles, and to stamp the ecclesiastical policy of the govern-

ment as wholly Whig. Party spirit already, from one cause or another, was dividing the country more than it ever had done before. Great and irreconcilable principles of internal and foreign policy lay at the root of those divisions. Every year they were asserting themselves more and more in the political world. Government by party was rapidly becoming the only possible system of government. Under such circumstances it was all important for the true welfare of religion in England that it should be kept out of the turmoil of party politics as much as possible. The unanimity with which Churchmen and nonconformists alike had resisted James II., the honourable way in which the Church had stood forward to vindicate the liberties of the nation, gave an opportunity for a generous and large-minded policy which should raise religion above politics. But it was not to be. The Church became divided according to the secular politics of the day. Broad Churchmen became Whigs, and High Churchmen Tories. The clergy threw themselves eagerly into the political strife, and began to look for preferment as the reward of political service. Descending into the arena of party strife, the Church quickly lost her spiritual ascendancy, and became begrimed with the dust of the conflict. Victories in the polls were more sought after than the triumphs of the Cross, and Atterbury takes the place of Ken as the typical Churchman of his time.

Exacerbation of party spirit.

This political spirit chiefly showed itself among Churchmen in their determination to maintain and enforce the civil disabilities of nonconformists. Recent events had proved clearly enough how dangerous it was to entrust political power to the hands of a dissenter from the national religion. There was not a man in England, outside their own body, who was prepared to give civil or even religious rights to Roman Catholics. Whigs and Tories combined to pass, in 1700, the act 'for preventing the growth of Popery' which put the coping-stone on the long series of penal acts repressive of Roman Catholicism, which date from the issue of the bull of Pius V. in 1570. By it a determined attempt was made by the

Act against Roman Catholics, 1700.

legislature to root Roman Catholicism out of England altogether, by preventing Roman Catholics both from educating their children in England except in their own houses, and from sending them abroad to be educated, while other provisions debarred them from inheriting or purchasing land. By the combined effects of the penal code, an English Roman Catholic could not legally attend the ministrations of his religion, serve his country in the army, navy, or civil service, become a member of a corporation, or inherit or acquire land, act in any position of trust as executor, guardian, or trustee, or belong to the medical or legal professions. He was strenuously debarred from all civic or political life, and the experience of the reign of James II. was taken by all classes of Englishmen conclusively to prove the justice and necessity of the policy. Tory Churchmen applied similar reasoning to the Protestant nonconformists. They were willing to permit them the use of their religion, and raised no opposition to the Toleration act. But they maintained that to give political power to presbyterians and independents—the children of the men who had overthrown the Church and the monarchy in 1645 and 1649—was to court an attack upon the constitution in Church and State quite as harmful as that designed by James II. They pointed to the exclusion bill and the comprehension bill as evidence of the spirit which was abroad, and set themselves to stop such a policy in the future by purging political life of the nonconformist element, and making the Test act more effective.

Occasional conformity.

Ever since the passing of that act, it had been the custom among some nonconformists, who desired political or civic position, to comply with the test by way merely of conformity to a legal obligation, and thus obtain political power although they were not members of the Church of England. This practice, to which was given the name of occasional conformity, was exceedingly disliked by the Tory Churchmen, and all through the reign of William III. the desire to put a stop to it by legislation was increasing, especially among the clergy. Other causes helped to foster the growing excitement. After the death of Mary in 1694, William appointed a few Whig bishops to form

a 'Commission for the exercise of ecclesiastical patronage,' who took care that no Tory should receive any high office in the Church. On the death of Tillotson in the same year, the primacy was conferred upon Tenison, bishop of Lincoln, who, though in many respects a strong man, was too pronounced a Whig and Latitudinarian to command the confidence of the bulk of the clergy. An ill-advised attempt of his to govern the Church by means of royal injunctions and royal letters to the bishops on doctrinal matters, after the manner of Henry VIII. or Elizabeth, made the exasperation still greater. The exaction of the Abjuration oath after the death of James II. in 1701, by which all clergy were obliged not only to abjure the descendants of James, but to recognise William as rightful king, added fuel to the flame, and produced a further crop of nonjurors. This was not all. William and his Whig advisers had most foolishly attempted to burke the opposition of the clergy by refusing to allow Convocation to meet for the discussion of business for eleven years. The advent of a Tory ministry to power in 1700, coupled with the influence the able pamphlets on the constitutional aspect of the question of by Atterbury and Sir Bartholomew Shower, made it impossible to continue so dangerous a policy. But directly Convocation met in 1701, it was seen that the feelings of the clergy were excited in the highest degree. The Lower House immediately asserted an independence of the bishops, based upon the analogy of Parliament, which was justified by neither principle nor precedent. They did not dare to trust the Whig bishops with the interests of the Church. Even the death of the king and the accession of Anne, who was a staunch friend to the Church and a Tory at heart, did not put an end to the strife. The ministry was Whig, and the bishops were Whig, if the queen was Tory. The primate showed no sign of adopting a more conciliatory attitude, and the Lower House continued to claim independence and to attack the bishops as the cause of all evils in the Church.

Unpopularity of William's ecclesiastical policy.

Claim of independence by the Lower House of Convocation, 1701-1709.

Meanwhile in Parliament a similar war was being waged over the question of occasional conformity. The majority of the House of Commons sympathised with the Tories on this question. Knowing that the queen was on their side, they passed session after session by large majorities a bill to put a stop to the practice Session after session the Lords threw the bill out, and the Whig bishops voted in the majority. The excitement grew more and more intense each year. The clergy in Convocation and the laity in the House of Commons felt themselves drawn to one another by a common opposition to a Whig majority among the bishops and in the Lords. The cry of the Church in danger was raised, and profoundly influenced the pious queen. Gradually she emancipated herself from her Whig surroundings and threw her influence on the Tory and High Church side. The Whigs, feeling that power was slipping from their grasp, determined to frighten their opponents into submission by an exhibition of power. They selected a blatant and pompous High Churchman, named Dr. Sacheverell, as their victim, and, having a majority at their back in the new House of Commons, formally impeached him for using seditious language in preaching before the Lord Mayor of London and the Judges of Assize at Derby. The sermons were pieces of effective rhetorical declamation directed against the Revolution and the Whig ministers, and had been extensively sold. The doctor was of course convicted, but even the Whig House of Lords could not bring themselves to inflict more than a nominal sentence. This was taken by the populace as a virtual acquittal. High Church and Dr. Sacheverell became the watchword of the hour. Tory enthusiasm blazed up all over the country. The queen seized the moment to dissolve Parliament; and the year 1710 saw her at the head of a Tory government, supported by a large Tory and High Church majority in the Commons. The Occasional Conformity act was at once passed. A more reprehensible act, called the Schism act, which was intended to prevent nonconformists from having their

The occasional conformity bills, 1702-1706.

Impeachment of Dr. Sacheverell, 1710.

High Church and Tory reaction, 1710-1714.

own schools for their own children, was also added to the statute book. Convocation turned its attention away from the Whig bishops to watch with suspicion the beginnings of the Trinitarian controversy, and Atterbury, the great champion of the Tory clergy, took his seat in the Upper House as bishop of Rochester.

Strong position of the Church, 1688-1714.

The High Church enthusiasm which was so characteristic of the reign of Anne was by no means the offspring of politics alone. Men were not devoted to the Church because they were politicians, but they became politicians because they were devoted to the Church. To maintain her rights, secure her position, and increase her efficiency, were to them the first of religious as well as of national duties. Towards the close of the seventeenth century the trials through which the Church of England had passed since the Reformation were beginning to bear fruit. She had ceased to fight for her existence with Puritanism. She was free to teach her own children in her own way. They in return for that teaching were beginning to realise the greatness of the gift which God had given them in the reformed Church. The theology of Hooker and Andrewes and Laud and the Caroline divines had placed her in a sound and impregnable position, both with regard to Puritanism and to Roman Catholicism. The writings of George Herbert and Donne and Crashaw and Jeremy Taylor had proved that the fairest flowers of devout literature could spring from the garden of her faith. The lives of Nicholas Ferrar, Juxon, Gunning, and Ken showed that a special type of restrained devotion, second to none in reality and sacrifice, was attainable by her children. The trials which she had suffered at the hands of the Puritans and of James II. witnessed to her stedfastness and tested her reality. Men readily accepted claims which came to them with such unmistakable vouchers, and bent their heads willingly to a yoke which they knew to be perfect freedom. They loved the Church with an enthusiastic, because a reasonable, love; as they loved their country. They refused to dissociate the one from the other; and they plunged into politics and ranged themselves on the Tory side, because

the Whigs had ousted the nonjurors, had silenced the constitutional organs of Church life, and connived at the desecration of the Sacraments.

We find accordingly that, in spite of its keen political zeal, the Church of the Revolution and of the reign of Anne was by no means backward in the promotion of the spiritual life. Towards the end of the reign of Charles II. societies of young men who wished to lead a religious life began to be formed, much after the pattern of modern religious guilds. Each society had its own chaplain and its own rules of Bible-reading, prayer, worship and almsgiving. Queen Mary, archbishop Tillotson, Dr. Beveridge, and Dr. Bray were among the foremost of their supporters. Daily service in many of the London churches, more frequent Celebrations of the Holy Communion, and better preparation for it, care for the poor and the prisoners, and the maintenance of free schools, were the direct fruit of these societies. So popular were they that in 1710 it was calculated that there were no less than forty-two in London and Westminster alone. The closing years of the century saw the birth of the well-known Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, which, beginning with a meeting of five men in a room gathered together by the zeal of Dr. Bray, has developed into one of the greatest influences for the spread of Christianity and civilisation which now exist in the world. It is interesting to notice that at the first meeting of the Society three branches of work were definitely taken up which have never since been neglected—the support of religious education in elementary schools, the assistance of the Church in the colonies, and the circulation of good literature at a cheap price. The very year after its foundation it provided books both for our armies in Flanders and for our fleets. In the year 1701 the Society gave birth to a daughter whose history is almost as well known. At Dr. Bray's instigation the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts was founded, with the special object of assisting the work of the

The religious societies, 1678-1714.

The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1698.

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, 1701.

Church in the colonies, both among the English settlers and the natives. It was the first great recognition of the duty of the English Church as a whole to minister to the spiritual needs of the empire, and sad as have been the shortcomings in that respect which the Church has to mourn, the fault has not lain so much with the Society as with the government of the day. Had it not been for the untimely death of Anne, the efforts of the Society would have succeeded in procuring the blessing of the episcopate for the American plantations in 1714.

Proofs of vigorous Church life, 1702-1714.

The foundation of societies such as these to assist the Church in fulfilling her duty to the nation and the empire is evidence of belief in her methods and trust in her future far more eloquent than the sermons of preachers or the speeches of politicians. When we add to such-like testimony the existence of the numerous societies for the deepening of spiritual life, of which mention has been made, the large attendance at the daily services of the Church, the institution in London churches of a weekly Celebration, the formation of societies to enforce the moral law, the foundation of a system of free schools all over the country, the formation of the Corporation of the Sons of the Clergy for the organised relief of clerical poverty, the surrender to the Church by queen Anne, with the consent of Parliament, of the firstfruits annexed to the crown by Henry VIII. for the purpose of increasing small benefices, the passing by Parliament of an act authorising the building of fifty new churches, we cannot fail to recognise a vigorous and intense spiritual vitality in the Church of England at this period wholly exclusive of political considerations. Politics were not the strength but the disease of the Church of England. She was used by the selfishness of both parties for their own ends. She became the tool and the plaything of party spirit; and as the bells rang out in 1714 to welcome the accession of George I., they sounded the death-knell of her high ideals and her vigorous life for more than half a century.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE ASCENDENCY OF LATITUDINARIANISM

A.D. 1714-1760

THE contrast between the lofty aspirations and bustling activity of the Church in the reign of Anne and the placid and somnolent quiet which distinguished her in the middle of the eighteenth century has long afforded material for the anxious thought of Churchmen. The question forces itself upon the notice of the most casual observer. Why was it that so much religious earnestness died so quickly away, that so much intelligent and devout appreciation of the full teaching of the Church lost its power? Why did faith become cold, energy dull, and enthusiasm sink to be a word of contempt? How was it that in 1714 the religious societies were in the full flood of their influence, while twenty years later John Wesley and his similar society at Oxford were jeered at as fanatics as they went to their weekly Communion at S. Mary's? The answer is to be sought in many quarters. The steady pressure of the government was uniformly exercised against activity in the Church of England until the accession of George III. in 1760. From 1714 to 1761 no politician who belonged to the Tory party was called to the inner counsels of his sovereign, no clergyman who was a Tory High Churchman was likely to be made a bishop. Some of the bishops appointed were men whose religious beliefs approached nearer to those of the unitarians than to the teaching of the Prayer-book. The influence of all the bishops was used to repress zeal, in the dread

Contrast between Stuart and Hanoverian Churchmanship.

Repressive policy of the Whigs, 1714-1760.

of another Tory outbreak like that which followed the impeachment of Dr. Sacheverell. The government took advantage of an attack made by Convocation in 1717 upon a book published by Dr. Hoadly, the bishop of Bangor, and the leader of the Whig clergy, to refuse to allow Convocation to meet at all for the despatch of business. From 1717 to 1850 the Church of England was prevented, by the unconstitutional action of the State, from taking counsel or effecting reforms in a constitutional way. The result was disastrous to her efficiency. The clergy lost all opportunity of expressing their views as to the needs of the Church. The bishops lost the benefit of a criticism which acted both as a check to partisanship and a spur to activity. Both were deprived of the only means by which they could learn to respect each other through the influence of free discussion. History shows that whenever educated men feel deeply on a subject, the occasional extravagance of view or heat of expression, which free discussion is certain to bring with it, is far less harmful than the sense of injustice, the unfairness, the bigotry, the sullenness, which results from suppression. Nothing did more to make the Tory clergy Jacobites than this refusal on the part of the Whig leaders to allow them to take that part in affairs which the constitution of their country had given to them. If the worst use to which a man can be put is to be hanged, so in a free country the worst use to which a constitutional assembly can be put is to be suppressed. It was difficult to believe in Whig zeal for religious liberty when it took the form of the forcible suppression of their opponents.

Suppression of Convocation, 1717-1850.

But this was not all. The Convocations were not only the deliberative assemblies of the clergy, but they were the legislative bodies of the Church. For eleven centuries, since the days of archbishop Theodore, the synodical action of the English Church had been regular and efficient. In great crises of her history it had been singularly wise and patriotic. Its influence for good upon the Church and nation was not to be measured simply by the canons formally passed, though they formed a code of moral and ecclesiastical

law quite worthy of being compared with the statute law of Parliament. It was by means of the Convocations that the governments of the day kept in touch with the feelings of Churchmen all over the country. From them came often directly, more often indirectly, the pressure which resulted in moral or religious improvement. When the Convocations were suppressed, the Church had to turn to Parliament for everything, and she could only approach Parliament through the bishops, who were out of sympathy with their clergy and under deep obligations to the government. Consequently, not only the distinctive interests of the Church, but the general interests of religion suffered. At a time when colonial expansion was taking place on all sides, when the responsibility of England for the moral and religious welfare of millions was increasing beyond all experience, when it was especially incumbent on civilised, to say nothing of Christian, governments to safeguard the religious and moral interests of their subjects in their eternal warfare with the demon of greed, to protect the child like races of the world under their influence from western vice and western brutality, when the development of mining industries at home was beginning to bring all the moral and social problems which haunt a teeming population and unhealthy occupations under the notice of philanthropists, the most powerful religious body in England was paralysed by the destruction of her accustomed modes of action. Under great difficulties she had to find new ways of making herself heard. She had to make that influence felt indirectly through the press and public meetings and Parliament, which she had hitherto exercised through Convocation directly on the crown and the government. With the exercise of a little wise forbearance on the part of the bishops the factious spirit of Convocation would soon have calmed down, and a powerful engine been preserved for counteracting the low standard of morality which soon became characteristic of the age. It is certain that the pressure of Convocation would have hastened the extension of the episcopate to the colonies, and promoted missionary enterprise. It is at least probable that it might have

done something to bring the influence of the Church to bear upon the problems of industrial life, and to quicken the public conscience in the matter of the slave trade.

Unfortunately, the whole influence of the leaders both in Church and State was directed towards the suppression not the regulation of all manifestations of religious zeal. The High Church movement in the reign of Anne had been largely tainted with Jacobite politics. Atterbury, bishop of Rochester, its ablest leader, had been willing to proclaim James III., on the death of Anne, at Charing Cross. It was true that this desire to restore the Stuarts was very much stronger in theory than it was in reality. It was largely built on feelings of romantic and generous loyalty to the memories of the past, and on the interest which always attaches to a fallen and persecuted cause. It was formidable in the hunting-field and round the dinner-table, but was not so serious in practical politics as it was supposed to be. The real strength of the Jacobite party in England lay in the unpopularity of the House of Hanover. Its own vitality as a political power was sapped by an incurable wound. An Atterbury or a Bolingbroke in 1714 might persuade himself that a Roman Catholic king was possible in England, and that the interests of the Church could be secured by compacts and arrangements. But the Tory squires who were asked to risk their heads, and the Tory clergy who were asked to bless a civil war, were not willing to do either for the sake of putting themselves and their country once more under the papal yoke. The High Church movement of the preceding thirty years was as intensely national as it was Tory. The maintenance and security of the Church of England was the very keystone of the whole structure, and no policy dependent on its support could succeed which endangered that principle in the very slightest degree. Had the Chevalier seen his way to join the Church of England, no Walpole, and certainly no Hoadly, could have kept him from Whitehall. If he remained a sincere and narrow Roman Catholic, no Bolingbroke and no Atterbury could place him there.

Extent of the danger from Jacobitism.

But in the turmoil of the times this obvious fact was overlooked.

Whig ministers, naturally enough, realised their own weakness. They were inclined to exaggerate the strength of their opponents. They set before themselves the maintenance of quiet as the cardinal principle of their policy, because by that they could best secure the interests of the new dynasty. To calm excitement, to repress ideals, to check ambition, to promote comfort, to deprecate energy, to turn men's thoughts from political and religious controversies to the contemplation of virtue and the enjoyment of life—such were the objects at which they aimed, because by their attainment they could make men satisfied with the existing state of affairs. To such a policy the Church, with her craving for something higher and something nobler than has yet been attained, with her mission to the human race, with her constant appeal to the energies of the whole man, and not merely to the intellectual part of him, must have always been opposed. If true to herself and her Master she could not renounce religious zeal or content herself with merely intellectual activity. She must be ever girding up her loins for fresh endeavour. Under any circumstances, therefore, she must have been looked upon by the Whigs as one of the most troublesome of the forces arrayed against their policy. But when, owing to the course of events, her supporters were known to be strongly dissatisfied with the reigning dynasty, and many of them believed to be actively disloyal, she was at once marked out as an enemy to be kept under.

Treatment of the High Church party as Jacobites.

Impatient of trying to distinguish between Tories and Jacobites, the Whigs determined to make their position secure by treating all Tories as if they were Jacobites, and all High Churchmen as if they were both. Since the Restoration most of the practical activity of the Church had been the work of High Churchmen, and the suppression of High Churchmanship practically meant the suppression of religious energy. Wherever earnestness appeared, Jacobitism was suspected. The religious societies which had done so much to revive personal religion since the middle of the reign of Charles II. were accused of being Jacobite clubs, and received their death-blow. Convocation was

suppressed for attacking the leading Whig pamphleteer in 1717. The scheme for appointing four bishops in the American colonies, which was on the point of being carried out when queen Anne died, was quietly shelved. The erection of fifty new churches for London, which had been voted by Parliament in 1711, was checked on the accession of George I., and only twelve out of the fifty remained to represent national money spent for Church purposes. Bishoprics were given either for political services or as the reward of apologetic or theological writing. The bishops were not expected to be organisers of religious energy, or earnest in pastoral work, and to such a point did some of them push this theory that they rarely appeared in their dioceses at all. Hoadly, though a strong political partisan, was a man of sober religious life, but he never set foot in his diocese of Bangor during the six years that he presided over it. Watson, bishop of Llandaff, finding no episcopal residence provided for him in his diocese, settled down in the Westmoreland lake country, and achieved such success as an agriculturist that he was enabled, as he proudly boasts, not only to regain his own health but make a comfortable provision for his family. Bishops had ceased to be great personages in the State. They did not wish to be the centres of great diocesan activity. They satisfied their consciences by setting an example of dignified and decorous Christian life, by exercising a stately hospitality, by displaying vigorous and effective erudition, and by giving a steady dynastic vote in the House of Lords.

The spirit of the age.

But the suppression of Convocation, and the deliberate discouragement of religious activity in the Church by Whig bishops and Whig ministers, in the supposed interests of the dynasty, were by no means solely accountable for the decay of personal religion and of corporate religious life, which is so remarkable and melancholy a fact in the history of the eighteenth century. They only promoted and developed tendencies already in existence within the bosom of the Church and of society. Many fair flowers of Christian perfection were crushed, many tender shoots of Church activity destroyed under

the iron heel of State policy: but had that not been used so relentlessly they would still have found life hard to maintain in the chill climate of the eighteenth century. Call it what we will —the spirit of the times, the tone of the age, progress of thought —there is a power which rules each changing period of history and moulds its thought and action quite unmistakably. It is expressed even more clearly in the evanescent fashions than in the deeper things of life. The contrast between the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries is best realised by comparing the age which wore perukes and danced the minuet with that which wears knickerbockers and dances the barn dance, or that which produced the heroic couplet with that which delights in Barrack-room Ballads. Conventionality rules the one age, unconventionality the other, whether it is in the fashion of a dress and the metre of a song, or in the tendency of thought, the guidance of conduct, or the expression of faith. No one age has the monopoly of religion. Each brings its own characteristic gift to the common store, and in the harmony of the ages truth stands manifest.

It was the province of the Church of England in the eighteenth century to bring religion to the test of reason, to prove that Christianity was true because it was reasonable. This was the special work of the Latitudinarian school which came to the front after the Revolution, and identified itself so closely with the Whig party. In Burnet, Tillotson, Stillingfleet and Tenison the Latitudinarians produced a body of men second to none of the High Church bishops in intellectual power and practical influence. When party spirit was running so high, between the Revolution and the accession of George I., they threw themselves eagerly into the fray on the Whig side, filled the bishopries vacated by the nonjurors, fought hard in favour of occasional conformity, and denounced the factiousness of Convocation. At the death of Anne they triumphed with the triumph of their party, and stamped their influence upon religious thought and action for nearly a century. That influence was uniformly used to depress 'enthusiasm.' While the government was checking

The Latitudinarians.

Dislike of enthusiasm.

all manifestations of religious energy for fear of Jacobitism, the Latitudinarians were sapping its foundations in the interests of reason. To assert the reasonableness of Christianity, to prove that religion is agreeable to common sense, and that the practice of virtue brings its own reward even in this life, to deprecate excitement, to denounce the dangers of fanaticism, to disprove the reality of special spiritual illumination, to insist upon the excellence of moderation — such were the lessons which the eighteenth century Latitudinarians had to teach. They were in many respects true lessons. But it was a cold and deadening creed. It threw all its strength into the intellectual side of religion. In its controversies with the intellectual opponents of Christianity, with the Deists of the early part of the century, and the unitarians, or perhaps Arians, of a later time, it is seen at its best. In the frosty region of formal argument it was not only effective but triumphant. Christianity owes no little debt to the lucid and scientific defenders of its fundamental principles in the eighteenth century, notably to bishop Butler. But the very insistance on reason as the sole test of religious truth, the defence of Christianity on the ground that faith was less illogical than unbelief, though possibly convincing to the doubter, was of little help to the disciple. Men after all are not all head, and in most men the head is not the most important part of their organisation. The weakness of Latitudinarian religion lay in the fact that it appealed too exclusively to the head and too little to the heart or the conscience. Adapting itself to the prevailing formalism of manners and taste, falling in with the strong reaction against excitement and party spirit, it substituted in religion a reasonableness of intellectual conception for the intimate union of the soul with God. It removed God away from the human heart to enthrone Him among the clouds and the snows of an intellectual Olympus. It called upon men to obey His moral law, not because He was Power and could punish, as Puritanism had done; still less because He was Love and could reward, as the Church had done; but because He was Reason, and obedience was reasonable duty.

Human nature, however, is so constituted as to be singularly irresponsive to the claims of reasonable duty. Men can obey the orders of authority implicitly, they will follow the leadership of love unreservedly, they never surrender themselves wholly to the guidance of reason. Reason is the engineer which fortifies, not the forlorn hope which captures, a moral position; and the attempt to give her the monopoly of religion is certain to dull the spiritual instincts and deaden the sensitiveness of the moral fibre. Argument can confuse as well as enlighten the conscience, and is often quick to become the slave of sloth and the apologist of abuse. Reasonable moderation easily degenerates into blind acquiescence, and men shut their eyes to the evils around them and plume themselves on the happiness and enlightenment of the age. So it was with the Church in the eighteenth century. Its corporate activity was destroyed by the suppression of Convocation, its practical energy was sacrificed to State policy, its mission spirit evaporated under Latitudinarian leadership, its conscience became dulled by the repression of enthusiasm, its very life blood chilled by the supremacy of reason and the worship of expediency. In an age of artificial formality, of self-satisfied enlightenment, of material prosperity, contentment with things as they were was an easy and comfortable creed. Duty to self as man took the place of duty to God in man. Responsibility of man for man was lost. Zeal for his spiritual welfare died away. Quiet and satisfaction reigned supreme; and lethargy, like a malarious fog, crept up the body of the Church of England and laid its cold hand upon her heart.

This spiritual deadness is visible in all departments of Church life. The religious societies, as we have seen, had died out by 1730. The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, though they still existed, lost much of their former activity and usefulness. Since the time of Edward VI. the universities had not been so corrupt and so inefficient and produced so few great men as they did in the reigns of George I. and George II. The evils of pluralities and non-residence were

Low moral and religious standard.

conspicuous throughout the century, especially among the bishops whose duty it was to suppress them. So hardened was the clerical conscience on such matters that those who objected to the system seemed, even to religious men, to be hypocrites. The fact was that, throughout society, men looked upon office not from the point of view of the duties to be performed but from that of the emoluments to be gained. They valued themselves at a certain price, and fell in without compunction with the system which produced the required reward. If they were politicians they expected and received, in the shape of sinecures and gratifications, what they considered to be a reasonable remuneration for their services. They would have repudiated with indignation the accusation that the offer of a gratuity for service rendered was morally the same as the giving of a bribe to secure the rendering of the service. If they were ecclesiastics they accepted deaneries and bishoprics and rectories, because by such combinations alone could they obtain a reasonable reward for their efforts. Believing that they were not being over-paid they were perfectly satisfied in conscience, and gave but little thought to the question whether they could adequately fulfil the duties which they had undertaken. Just as the religious houses of the Middle Ages thought themselves quite justified in the sight of God and His Church in maintaining themselves by the tithes of parishes, if they made provision for the spiritual wants of the parishioners by the appointment of a vicar; so did the bishops and deans of the eighteenth century think themselves quite justified in accumulating preferment as long as they appointed curates to discharge the legal obligations of their benefices.

But however easily the system may be explained or paralleled, there can be no doubt as to its iniquity. The more it flourished the more dead became religion, the more dull the sense of responsibility, The practice of daily service in town churches was given up. In country parishes where the rector was a pluralist and there was no curate, only one service became possible even on Sundays. Public catechising in the afternoon necessarily ceased. Celebrations of the Holy Eucharist, which

had grown in frequency during the High Church revival, quickly sank into almost total neglect. In most parishes it was celebrated on the three great festivals alone, and although archbishop Secker, when bishop of Oxford, reminded his clergy in 1741 that 'a Sacrament might easily be interposed in the long interval between Whitsuntide and Christmas,' it is evident from his tone that he did not expect that even this modest suggestion would bear much fruit. After this we are the less astonished to find that, at S. Paul's Cathedral in London in the year 1800, there were but six communicants at the only celebration on Easter Day. The use of the word Sacrament to mean the Eucharist alone suggests how rarely the sacrament of Baptism was administered in public. The old fonts became looked upon as encumbrances, and were frequently removed to the rectory garden to serve as flower-pots, while their place was taken by a small stone basin standing on a pedestal in the most remote corner of the church where the schoolboys sat. Confirmation was administered only at a few large centres in a diocese, and was often little better than a day's outing to the candidates. The interior of the churches spoke eloquently enough of the two prevailing vices of the time—apathy and exclusiveness. The whitewashed walls, the damp stone floors, the ceiled roof, the high stiff pews with mouldy green baize cushions and faded red curtains, allotted to all the principal houses and farms in the parish; the hard benches without backs, pushed into a corner or encumbering the aisle, where the poor might sit; the mean table with a moth-eaten red cloth upon it in the chancel; the charity school, with its distinctive dress marking its members as charity children, crammed into a dark side gallery where they could neither see nor hear, lest their presence should contaminate the well-to-do parishioners who paid for them; the dirt inseparable from perishing woodwork and rotting leather; the indescribable dank smell of decay, are experiences of their childhood familiar enough to many now living, and almost universal to those who lived a century ago.

And yet the age was one profuse and luxurious in all the surroundings of secular life. Peer vied with peer and nabob with

nabob in building huge palaces for themselves after the Italian manner, laying out gardens, erecting statues, collecting paintings, furnishing their houses with rich if ostentatious luxury. All over the country were springing up the comfortable well-to-do red brick houses of the squires and the professional classes, which are such a characteristic feature of England. The standard of comfort was rising. Money was being made rapidly. It was being spent freely upon dress and entertainment, upon art and furniture. Only for the service of God, only for the highest welfare of man, was none to be obtained. Population was increasing by leaps and bounds, especially in towns; the north of England was transformed from a wilderness into a hive of industry during the century. Yet the teeming population was allowed to grow up without churches, without schools, without religion. Neither the Church nor the State made the smallest effective provision for their souls or their bodies in the interests of religion, of morality, or of health. Well-to-do people provided for their own religious wants at Cheltenham or Bath or Brighton by the system of proprietary chapels, by which a popular preacher invested money in hiring a building and fitting it up as a chapel, and then having obtained a licence from the bishop attracted a large congregation and made a handsome income by letting the seats. But while the rich were looking after themselves the poor were left to perish. From 1711, when a grant of £350,000 was made by Parliament for the building of fifty churches—of which only twelve were built—to 1811, when £1,000,000 was granted by Parliament for a similar purpose, hardly any attempt was made from public or private sources to meet the needs of the growing population. It is said that even as late as 1819, Dr. Middleton failed to raise sufficient funds in all London for building a new church in the parish of S. Pancras, though the population exceeded a hundred thousand, and the existing church only held two hundred persons.

Neglect of the poor.

If we turn to social matters, which are no bad test of the state of the religious conscience of the age, though they are less directly connected with religion, we find the same melancholy

story of neglect, apathy, and brutality. The prisons did far more to manufacture and harden criminals than to deter them from crime or even to punish them for it. The debtors' prisons were the home of every conceivable rascality, and in connection with that of the Fleet flourished for many years unheeded the shocking abuse of the Fleet marriages. The working of the poor law and of the workhouses degraded and brutalised human nature, and a barbarous criminal law swept out of existence in batches the victims of the system. Slavery seemed so reasonable and the slave-trade so necessary an institution, that even religious societies became the owners and purchasers of slaves, and satisfied their consciences by taking care that the slaves should receive Christian instruction. Since the days of paganism there has probably been no age which has been more inclined than the eighteenth century to ignore the brotherhood of man and plead the excuse of Cain: Am I my brother's keeper?

In one matter, however, there was visible throughout the century a clear and steady improvement. Religious toleration gained acceptance more and more distinctly as a moral principle. Directly the triumph of the Whigs was assured on the accession of George I., they turned their attention to the removal of the civil disabilities of the Protestant nonconformists. Before the century was out the demand for absolute religious equality was a cardinal feature of the Whig policy. In 1718 the Occasional Conformity act and the Schism act were repealed by the ministry of Stanhope, and nonconformists permitted again to hold civil office by a formal compliance with the test. This naturally led to much greater laxity in requiring evidence of compliance, and gradually it became common for nonconformists to be elected to and hold civil office without any compliance at all. In 1727, during the ministry of Walpole, the aid of Parliament was invoked to cover such breaches of the law, and year by year acts of indemnity were passed to pardon those who had been guilty of them. By this round-about method Protestant nonconformists were relieved of civil disabilities before the

Establishment of religious toleration, 1718-1858.

middle of the century, though the Test and Corporation acts were not repealed.

When all danger from Jacobitism had completely passed away, men began to be sensible of the extraordinary severity of the penal laws affecting the Roman Catholics, and in 1778 the first step was taken in the direction of recognising that a Roman Catholic could have civil and religious rights. Religious worship was permitted, the forfeiture of estates under the act of William III. repealed, and the acquisition of land allowed. Even these modest relaxations stirred up a good deal of fanaticism in the country, and led to the famous Lord George Gordon riots of 1780. But such outbursts did not check the growth of public opinion. Under the pressure of the great war Roman Catholics were given commissions in the army and navy. Had it not been for the conscientious scruples of George III. they would have been relieved of all their civil disabilities by Mr. Pitt after the passing of the act of union between Great Britain and Ireland in 1800. In consequence of the attitude of the king and the strain of the war they had to wait a few years longer. In 1828 the Test and Corporation acts were repealed, and in the following year the Catholic Emancipation act was passed. The Unitarians had already received relief in 1813. In 1833 the sects who objected to taking an oath were permitted to enter Parliament by making a declaration; and finally, in 1858, the last disabilities of any great importance were abolished by the admission of the Jews to parliamentary rights. But though the work was not legally complete till the nineteenth century was half over, the principle had won its way to general acceptance before the end of the eighteenth century, and the postponement of its triumph was due more to the exigencies of politics than to the backwardness of public opinion.

On the whole, it must be confessed, the balance of feeling amongst Churchmen, both clerical and lay, was against the removal of the tests though in favour of freedom of worship. Partly, no doubt, there was an unfortunate though not unnatural desire, especially among the clergy, to fight for exclusive privileges

for their own sake. The Church, deprived of its natural corporate action in its synods, and as yet unaccustomed to strike out new paths for itself in conferences and congresses, was led to lay a good deal of stress upon its unity and cohesion in connection with the State. It valued the maintenance of the tests as a witness to its unique position among English religious bodies. But far deeper than such considerations lay the conviction that it was unsafe for the nation to entrust the management of its affairs to an assembly composed of rival and jarring creeds. Remembering that ever since the Reformation the difficulties which had threatened to shatter the constitution and had imperilled the very existence of the nation had been mainly of religious origin, men feared that a parliament of all religions would soon degenerate into faction and anarchy. The fear has proved on the whole illusory, but there is even now more reason for it than is often admitted. The questions which Parliament deals with least efficiently are those questions with which religion is closely connected, and the dangers of faction have always arisen from those quarters where deep religious differences underlie political opposition. Experience has proved that these are risks which the nation may safely run, but the caution which hesitated to launch the ship of state into an unknown sea was not pure obstructiveness, any more than the statesmanship which compelled the voyage was nothing but rashness.

Character of the clergy, 1714 1800.

It is sometimes assumed that because the bulk of the clergy in the eighteenth century were unenlightened in politics, dull in conscience, and apathetic in religion, they were immoral in their private lives, and failed as a body to set a religious example to their parishioners. There is but little evidence of this. Of course there were bad men among the clergy, but taking them as a whole their faults were rather those of the time than of the men. Their failure lay in the fact that they were not superior to their times. Even as it was, they were decidedly better than the laity. The higher classes, especially in the middle of the century, were vicious and profane, the lower classes brutal and irreligious. The middle

classes alone were seriously disposed. The clergy, though wanting in the subtle power which sanctity and devotion alone can give, were as a body exemplary in their lives, diligent in study, kindly in nature, and sensible in advice. They did not attempt either to be saints themselves or to make saints of others. But they gave a willing and helpful hand to their parishioners over the stiles in the path of life, and were content if they were able to preserve them from the grosser sins. In learning, the English clergy of the eighteenth century need not shrink from comparison with those of any age or any country. The names of Warburton, Butler, Berkeley, Waterland, and Paley are sufficient to attest this. To the clergy was mainly due whatever was done in the way of elementary education. They were strict, perhaps too strict, in inculcating the observance of Sunday, and cordially welcomed the institution of Sunday schools. In their relation to the court and in the struggle for preferment they are seen at their worst, but in the humble discharge of daily duty, according to the standard of the times, they are not open to serious accusation. If the coal from off the altar did not touch their lips, if the sword of the spirit did not pierce their hearts, if the power of the Cross was not dominant in their lives, it was because these are the special gifts and rewards of 'enthusiasm,' and to be an 'enthusiast' in the eighteenth century was to be out of harmony with the age.

CHAPTER XIX

METHODISM AND THE EVANGELICAL REVIVAL

A.D. 1738-1833

Towards the middle of the eighteenth century, when the dulness of spiritual religion in the Church of England was slowly chilling into death, she was suddenly called upon to face a problem which required not merely the highest powers of statesmanship, but the most delicate gifts of spiritual insight. The problem which Innocent III. had hardly succeeded in solving in the cases of S. Dominic and S. Francis of Assisi, which Alexander VI. had failed to solve in the case of Savonarola, and Leo X. in the case of Luther, presented itself for solution to Sir Robert Walpole and archbishop Potter. The difficulty of adapting novel developments of irregular and imperious spiritual zeal to the rules of an existing Church polity is perhaps the greatest which can tax the powers of an ecclesiastical ruler. It requires for its effectual solution wisdom among the leaders, and a high standard of religion among the people. Unfortunately for England both conditions were wanting when John Wesley began to organise the Methodist societies and George Whitefield to preach to the colliers at Kingswood.

In the year 1729 a small body of men at Oxford formed themselves into a religious society, as men often have done before and since, for the assistance and improvement of their own spiritual lives. They put themselves under the direction of John Wesley, then one of the junior fellows of Lincoln College, and soon earned the ridicule of their laxer neighbours by the strictness of their churchmanship. They observed the fasts and festivals of the Church, they received the

John Wesley, 1729-1739.

Holy Communion every week, they visited the sick and the prisoners, they kept themselves as far as possible unspotted from the world. Such was the first of Wesley's societies. At that time, and for some years afterwards, the chief religious influence upon his life was that of William Law, the nonjuror, whose well-known *Serious Call* did much to strengthen his earnestness and mould his thought. From him he learned to look upon the surrender of self to God in His Church as the essence of real religion, and to feel and realise the rewards of a spiritual and living faith. From the first, therefore, an ardent love of God was the cardinal principle of his religious life, working at first rather rigidly under the restraints of the Catholic Church, though not based on any great knowledge of Catholic theology, working afterwards in the freer atmosphere of his own societies, but always in sharp contrast to the reasonable religion and intellectual faith of the dominant school. The tendency to insist upon the inward movements of the soul as the test of true religion received a remarkable confirmation in the year 1738, when, largely owing to the influence of the Moravian brethren, with whom he was closely connected at that time, he passed through the spiritual experience which they were accustomed to call the 'new birth.' At a meeting of their society in Aldersgate Street, when Luther's preface to the epistle to the Romans was being read, Wesley felt, as he expresses it, 'my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation, and that an assurance was given to me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.' From that moment he received a conviction of the reality of religion, and a consecration to the service of God, different in kind from the grace which he might have received at his baptism or ordination, or from absolution. He felt that he had a special message to deliver, for which the limitations of the parochial system were too narrow. He took the whole of England as his parish, and set out on preaching tours from place to place in order to announce to a world still lying in bondage to sin the good tidings of the new birth.

The effect of his preaching was extraordinary. Without the arts or the physical gifts of a great orator, he had at his command a force of language and directness of appeal which was inspired by intense earnestness and ordered by an indomitable will. Under influences, probably hypnotic in their nature, strong men rolled on the ground in hysterical convulsions acknowledging the throes of the new birth, and lived afterwards sober Christian lives. Thousands who had never thought of religion, except to mock at it, were converted. His success was chiefly among the lower classes, who were largely outside the ordinary influence of the Church. Not many educated men and but few of the clergy openly sympathised with him, though some of the bishops encouraged him with kind words. Minds trained in the philosophy of Locke and the theology of Tillotson feared fanaticism when they encountered zeal, but the small tradesmen of the towns, and the labourers, and the artizans, cared little for moderation and reason, but were carried away by the gospel of love. Soon converts became so numerous that some organisation for their instruction and training became necessary, and by slow degrees the elaborate system of the Methodist society grew up, with its circuits of itinerant lay preachers, its preaching houses, its class meetings, its band meetings, and its conference. Over all the extraordinary administrative talent of John Wesley asserted itself. As long as he lived, however numerous and widely extended were the limbs of Methodism, there was but one heart and one head. Practically it was a religious order in the Church of England, a society, like that of the friars preacher, or the friars minor, or the society of Jesus, with its own special objects, its own special rules, its own special organisation, but differing from them in the fact that it was in no constitutional relation to the Church whatever. It had no 'rule' approved by the Church, no status or privileges accorded to it by the Church. It could not strictly claim doctrinal identity with the Church or even doctrinal unity in itself.

Formation of the Methodist society, 1739.

Loose as was the connection between the Methodist move-

ment and the Church from the first, it was soon rendered looser still by the powerful but erratic genius of George Whitefield.

George Whitefield.

Appointed from behind the bar at the Bell inn, Gloucester, to a servitorship at Pembroke College, he became a member of Wesley's religious society at Oxford, and was ordained by Benson, bishop of Gloucester, at the unusually early age of twenty-one. It was a mistaken kindness. Whitefield was endowed by nature with extraordinary natural gifts as an orator—a noble presence, a ready command of apt and effective phrases, a voice capable of expressing every shade of varying emotion and perfectly under control, the quick sympathies and instincts of an actor. He was fired by a zeal for souls which is beyond suspicion. Every thought and every action of his was prompted by the love of God. But his knowledge was inconsiderable, his mental ability by no means great, and his judgment frequently at fault. Had he had an exceptionally long and careful training for Holy Orders, probably these defects would have been to a great extent mastered. A popular and emotional preacher at the age of twenty-one, he had no opportunity of learning the most necessary elements of discipline. Yet in spite of these drawbacks his earnestness and oratorical power soon proved irresistible. Impatient of the restraints of walls he loved to gather his congregations in the fields and on the commons. Ten or twenty thousand at a time, it is said, hung breathless upon his words, and he swayed their emotions and commanded their wills with the ease with which the elder Pitt ruled Parliament.[1] Cynical men of the world, like Chesterfield, were so moved by his powers of description as to lose their self-control. Rough colliers were so affected by his pathos as to sob aloud like children. Nothing to equal him had been known in Christendom since Peter the Hermit preached the crusade. And it was a veritable crusade that both he and Wesley believed that they were preaching—a new warfare against the world, the flesh, and the devil, with new weapons, under the direct leader-

[1] Probably Whitefield was the only man of the century who could have shared with Mr. Pitt the honours of the famous 'sugar' episode.

ship of the spirit of God. Absolutely convinced of the supreme importance of their own system, they went forth to lead the hosts of the Lord against the kingdom of vice and of sloth.

But before long they came to the parting of the ways. No one could have a more untheological mind than Whitefield, and it is probable that he never fully realised to himself with any precision what he did hold in the way of doctrine and what he did not hold. But it seems pretty clear that by 1740 he had so far ordered his religious thought on the theology of Calvin as to believe in the absolute corruption of man's nature, the election by God of those who are to be saved, and in justification by faith alone apart from works. More than this, he was making these doctrines the staple of his sermons. Wesley, on the contrary, had the strongest possible objection to Calvinism, both on religious and on moral grounds. He saw that the doctrine of the election of some logically involved that of the reprobation of others, do what they would—a doctrine which made God a tyrant, and so struck against the central principle of religion, His love. He thought too that the doctrine of election logically took away from men all sense of moral responsibility, and so tended to lawlessness, while the depreciation of the value of good works must necessarily render men less inclined to do them. The difference of opinion between the two leaders on these profound subjects soon grew into a serious controversy within the body of the society itself, and even affected the Church outside the society. Lady Huntingdon, the most influential of its members, threw the whole weight of her purse and her influence on the Calvinistic side. Wesley himself was able to retain his conference in the orthodox or, as it was called, Arminian path. The rift became gradually larger, and the controversy more and more barren, until it was found that the gulf could not be bridged when the time came for the society to organise itself apart from the Church. The Calvinistic Methodists and Lady Huntingdon's connection are the legitimate descendants of George Whitefield and the Calvinists, while the

Theological differences between Wesley and Whitefield, 1740-1781.

Wesleyan Methodists trace their lineage to John Wesley and the Arminians.

This serious difference of opinion in the body of the Methodist society itself no doubt made its relations with the Church more difficult. The revival of the controversies of the sixteenth century made the educated and philosophical more suspicious of enthusiasm than ever. The divisions in the Methodist ranks made men generally less inclined to support them or sympathise with them. The slender ability with which the controversy was conducted, and the extreme bitterness of feeling which it engendered, made the learned laugh in good-humour or sneer in contempt. But, even if there had been no difference of opinion at all, it would have required much more statesmanship and much more insight than any of the bishops of the eighteenth century, or indeed Wesley himself, possessed, to have reconciled the Methodist movement with the system of the Church. In belief, it is true, the differences to the eyes of a theologian were more apparent than real, and might have been reconciled without surrender of principle. The doctrines which Wesley added to the creed were practically two—that of the new birth and that of Christian perfection. The latter as stated by Wesley himself, in his own guarded language, amounted to nothing more than the old Catholic doctrine of the possibility of the life of sanctity, and was really objected to much more by the Calvinists in the interests of the inherent corruption of man than it was by Churchmen in their dread of fanaticism. With regard to the former he was always careful to maintain the efficacy of baptism in the regeneration of the baptized, and looked upon the new birth as the substitute for, or evidence of, repentance and absolution, by which post-baptismal sin was done away, and a fresh start, so to speak, made in the spiritual life. It is obvious that there was no reason for secession here from a society so little bound by doctrinal formularies as the Catholic Church. But unfortunately his followers were not so careful in their language or so guarded in their belief. To them the new birth took the place of baptism in the Church system, and was

Estrangement between Wesley and the Church.

considered to be the beginning of spiritual life, and to put man in right relations with God; and as emotional preachers were more abundant than theologians in the Methodist society, there soon began to be manifest a serious difference between their teaching and that of the Church.

At the same time the society was daily becoming more and more important in Wesley's own eyes. It was no longer merely a society for developing spiritual life within the Church. It had become practically synonymous with the Church itself, and represented to him all that was vital in the religion of the Church. Unlike S. Francis or S. Ignatius, he never submitted the rules of his society to the authorities of the Church. He never sought provincial or even diocesan sanction for his action. He swept away with a wave of his hand the territorial organisation of the Church, as Luther did the epistle of S. James. 'It is an epistle of straw,' said the masterful reformer. 'It is a rope of sand,' said the no less masterful revivalist. The Methodist society was to override all diocesan and parochial limits by the simple will of its founder, just as Lutheran theology was to override that of S. James; and every one who ventured to support the old system was denounced as an obstacle to the spread of the Gospel. This is the very spirit of schism. After all, the organisation of the Church had been territorial from the earliest centuries. The diocese was the centre of the Church system, the parish was a definite legal area, and the parish priest had in the course of ages acquired certain definite rights by law and by prescription. The Methodist society broke right across this system with its claim of religious superiority, but in a very few years it adopted a similar system of its own, only with different local areas. The circuit took the place of the parish, the superintendent that of the bishop, and Wesley—and here was the chief difference—became the pope. He would not even suspend the action of the society in parishes where one of his own friends and sympathisers was incumbent. What wonder that the English clergy who found their parishes invaded without the knowledge and consent of the bishop, a preaching house erected, and laymen preaching

therein without his licence, should be somewhat sceptical as to the love of the leaders of the society for the Church of England?

No doubt Wesley himself designed his society to supplement not to supplant the Church. All through his life he insisted in the strongest possible terms on the duty of remaining in the Church. His dearest friends and helpers, Whitefield, his brother Charles Wesley, Fletcher of Madeley, Venn of Huddersfield, Grimshaw of Haworth, Berridge of Everton, were all ordained, most of them beneficed, clergymen of the Church of England. In overriding the parochial system in the interests of his society he was only doing what the friars had done centuries ago, and was not consciously acting with disloyalty to the Church. Even in his neglect to obtain ecclesiastical sanction for his society, he never realised that he was therefore acting without the authority of the Church and could not claim any mission from her. His failure lay in his inability to grasp the essentially spiritual character of the organisation of the Church under all the paraphernalia of the law. He looked upon the Church mainly as a legal establishment of religion, and never understood that in the charge over the souls in his diocese committed to the bishop, and in part delegated by him to the parochial clergy, lay the sole spiritual authority for the discharge of pastoral duties. Apart from the sanction of the bishop, express or implied, all pastoral ministration must be irregular. Looking at the outward structure of the Church mainly as a political arrangement for the advancement of religion, he treated such irregularity as merely irregularity in the eyes of the law, and not as in any way contrary to the purposes of God. Thus, in spite of his real attachment to the Church of England and his passionate dislike of separation, Wesley himself, by his own authority alone, organised his society on a basis absolutely opposed to the first principles of Church order; and the society itself founded its spiritual life on a doctrine which, as taught and believed therein, was absolutely contrary to Catholic theology. Practically, whatever the Wesleys themselves might think or say, they were in fact treating England as a heathen country, and setting about to convert it by the doctrine of the new birth.

Naturally enough the members of the Society soon became far more impatient of the restraints of the Church than were their leaders. To them the society through which they had been converted, and had experienced the delicious pangs of the new birth, in which they were being trained in the life of Christian perfection, was their spiritual home. The Church was an organisation outside their ordinary religious life, and often hostile to it. They did not feel themselves her disciples. They had no filial duties to her clergy or her bishops. Many of them had never been inside a church until as Methodists they went to receive the Holy Communion. As the society grew, and its organisation became more elaborate and self-sufficing, the tendency to greater and greater independence became irresistible. Wesley recognised it, lamented it, struggled against it, and submitted to it. He had founded his society on a basis outside Church principle. He had no right to complain if it developed itself on lines outside Church order. To some extent the law itself hastened the separation, for the only way in which the preaching houses could obtain legal recognition was by being registered under the Toleration act as nonconformist meeting-houses, while the lay preachers received licences as Nonconformist teachers. But the society itself had no scruples in accepting the position of a sect. In 1744 was held the first Wesleyan conference, in which the relation of the society to the Church was carefully defined. The conference agreed to obey the bishops in things indifferent, and observe the canons as far as with a safe conscience they could; but, 'while they did not desire a schism in the Church,' they asserted that 'they must not neglect the present opportunity of saving souls for fear of the consequences.' People in this frame of mind are not far from open separation, and in 1760 distinct acts of schism were committed by the lay preachers of Norwich, who took upon themselves to administer the Holy Communion. From that time, as Grimshaw of Haworth said, the Methodists were to all intents and purposes a nonconformist sect, with their own separate doctrines, organisa-

Breach between Methodism and the Church, 1744-1784.

tion, and worship. A few years later, in 1784, Wesley himself admitted this in act, though not in word, by going through the form of consecrating two bishops to superintend the Methodist congregations in America. In word he never could bring himself to admit it, and in deference to him formal separation did not take place until his long life had ended. In 1789, only two years before his death, he made an impassioned and pathetic appeal to his followers not to separate. 'In God's name,' he cried, 'stop! Ye yourselves were first called to the Church of England, and although ye will have a thousand temptations to leave it and set up for yourselves, regard them not. Be Church of England men still. Do not cast away that peculiar glory which God hath put upon you, and frustrate the design of Providence, the very end for which God raised you up.' Unfortunately the principles of Wesley did not carry his conclusions. He had persuaded himself that the priesthood was endowed with the same powers as the episcopate, and that therefore he could ordain priests and deacons and consecrate bishops. He had also persuaded himself that to set up a rival ministry to that of the Church was not separation. His followers saw things differently. Wesley died in 1791. In 1795 the preachers were authorised to administer the Lord's Supper, and separation was finally accomplished. It was quickly followed by internal dissensions. In 1797 the Methodist New Connexion was formed. In 1810 the Primitive Methodists seceded, and at the present day nineteen different forms of Methodism are publicly registered.

However Churchmen may deplore some of his acts and the general tendency of his teaching, John Wesley must always stand out in English Church history as the greatest religious figure of the eighteenth century. To him is due the revival of personal religion in England. It was inevitable, no doubt, that a reaction should come against the materialism and the spiritual torpor of the age. Unless the time had indeed arrived when the candlestick of the English Church was to be removed from its place, that reaction was as certain as the flow of the tides and the alternation of the seasons. Men

Character of Wesley's work.

cannot for long nourish their spiritual life on negations. They will not long adhere to a religion which recommends itself on the ground that it is less unreasonable and less inexpedient than any other known system of faith or unbelief. But that the reaction came when it did, and how it did, and took the form that it did, is due to John Wesley more than to any one else. It is true that the Evangelical revival in the Church of England, and the Calvinistic revival so powerful in Wales, were more directly inspired by the personality of Whitefield than by that of Wesley. But it must be remembered that Whitefield himself, as well as the earliest of the Evangelical clergy, were members of Wesley's society at Oxford, and who can imagine for a moment that Whitefield could have organised and ruled the Methodist society, or that Ingham or Harvey could have gathered into it from the highways and hedges the poor and the maimed, the halt and the blind? The whole movement is stamped with the hall-mark of its maker. It was the spiritual experience of Wesley which gave it its doctrines of the new birth and Christian perfection, the practical mind of Wesley that instituted the class meeting and the weekly payments, the statesmanship of Wesley that adopted the system of circuits and itinerant preachers, the personal experience of Wesley that suggested the idea of a society within the Church, the inadequate conception of the Church held by Wesley which led him to authorise acts of separation while longing with all his heart for unity. And though Methodism and the Church soon found their paths diverge, though the Church, unorganised, inert, and unspiritual, could not find ready to her hand the genius which alone could have conquered the difficulties, though the society soon became more to its members and even to its founder than the Church of which it formed part, though separation in the end resulted, it was Wesley and the Methodists who warmed the chilled blood of the Church of England once more into activity by the doctrine of love.

John Wesley was, in fact, the S. Francis of the eighteenth century. Like him he received in his spiritual experience the

direct call of God to a complete surrender of self. Like him he found in the love of God the central truth which inspired his life and ruled his will. To live the life of Jesus Christ in the world was the common object of both—of the one through imitation of His poverty, of the other of His sinless perfection. The revival of personal religion in a coarse and profligate age through the instrumentality of a society was their common achievement. The Methodist, like the friar minor, took the world as his parish. He planted himself in the crowded cities and among the outcast population. His mission was to the poor, the unlearned, and the neglected. He cared not for boundaries of parish or country. Borne on the wings of love, he crossed the seas bringing to all who would hear at the churchyard cross, on the village green, in the streets, and on the moors, the glad tidings of forgiveness. Indeed, with due allowance for the differences of the time, the methods as well as the objects of Wesley were singularly like those of S. Francis. There was a similar use of colloquial and simple sermons, similar reiteration of a few all-important truths, similar renunciation of all pomp and splendour of service or building, similar religious use of hymns and music. Even the obstacles which they encountered and the difficulties which they raised were similar. The sneer of the worldly, the accusation of fanaticism, the dread of the orderly, the dislike of the parish clergy, the timidity of the bishops, the self-sufficiency of the members of the society themselves, were trials common to both. That the sons of S. Francis, with all his individuality, remained devoted children of the Church, that the sons of Wesley, with all his personal loyalty, found their natural sphere outside the Church, was due under God to the circumstances of the time. In the thirteenth century, under Innocent III., spiritual leadership did for the Church what constitutional order could hardly have done. In the eighteenth century, under archbishop Potter, constitutional anarchy could do nothing at all except let the two parties gradually drift asunder. True, Wesley was not a S. Francis in his humility, his self-discipline, or his obedience. Even an Innocent III. would

Parallel between Wesley and S. Francis.

have had some difficulty in guiding that imperious nature. Left without guidance, subjected to no control, Wesley asserted for a brief moment his spiritual kinship with the hero-saint of the Middle Ages, only to fall back overpowered on the methods of ordinary Protestant dissent.

The earlier Evangelical leaders.

It sounds like a paradox to assert that in the revival of personal religion in the eighteenth century, the Churchman became the dissenter, while the dissenters remained within the Church. Yet from a particular point of view the statement is correct. Wesley, though not in any true sense of the word a High Churchman, for he never seems to have grasped any adequate idea of the Church as the Divine spiritual society and spouse of Christ, was to the end of his life a zealous, and, to some extent, a precise Churchman. Yet he himself was guilty of distinct acts of schism in his life-time, and his followers formally separated from the Church within five years of his death. On the other hand, his friends and contemporaries, Harvey, Grimshaw, Berridge, and Romaine, were in doctrine Calvinists, and had much more intellectual sympathy with the more mystical of the Calvinistic sects which had arisen out of the Puritan movement than they had either with Wesley or with Anglican theology. Yet to a man they remained beneficed priests of the Church of England until their death. Grimshaw denounced the action of the Norwich preachers in administering the Lord's Supper. Romaine withdrew from Lady Huntingdon's Connection, when that body practically separated itself from the Church in 1781. This attachment of the Calvinistic section of Wesley's friends to the Church was all the more striking because some of them were just as regardless of Church order as was Wesley himself, and were much further away from Catholic sympathies. Grimshaw and Berridge were accustomed to itinerate and preach in other people's parishes, without thinking of asking their leave or obtaining a licence from the bishop. Venn did the same until he became vicar of Huddersfield, but in later life acknowledged his mistake. None of them sympathised with the desire of Wesley to revive the usages of the primitive Church, and

though Grimshaw, like Laud, intended that the discipline of the Church should be felt in his parish, he enforced it with a horse-whip and not by excommunication. It is, therefore, at first sight difficult to account for the fact that, while the section of the Calvinist Methodists who followed Whitefield and were attached to Lady Huntingdon practically separated from the Church in 1781, and almost the whole of the Arminian Methodists who followed Wesley practically separated in 1784, the other section of the Calvinists never separated at all, but remained in the Church of England till they died, although they were opposed to a great deal of her theology and practice, and some of them were accustomed habitually to neglect her discipline.

Their modified Calvinism.

The explanation is to be found in the fact which constituted both the strength and the weakness of their position. From the first, the Evangelical revival was distinguished by a want of systematic theology and a tendency to dwell disproportionately upon a few great truths. This produced a concentration of thought and feeling which bound its members together as a party, and gave them an influence far beyond that which their numbers warranted, but at the same time condemned them to intellectual barrenness. They thus emancipated themselves from the chains of that grim and immoral logic which had forced Calvin to make God into a tyrant and condemn the bulk of mankind into everlasting torment for no fault of their own. Basing their conception of religion, like Calvin, upon the total depravity of human nature, they used it to magnify the love of God in redemption, not to prove His justice in condemnation. While treating the sacraments as Calvin did, as signs of grace already given, and not as means by which grace is acquired, they did not feel obliged to dwell upon the arbitrary choice of His elect by God as the real beginning of Christian life. Though, like Calvin, they held the theory that the sacrifice of the Cross was the punishment of the innocent instead of the guilty, and not the self-sacrifice of the innocent on behalf of the guilty, they did not think it necessary to insist that it only availed for the elect and not for all mankind. In this moderate Calvinism there was

nothing lawless, nothing fierce, nothing gloomy. It did not revive the distinctive Calvinistic teaching which had been the basis of Puritanism, and had found expression in the Lambeth articles and the Westminster confession. It merely had the ordinary defects of Protestant as compared with Catholic theology. It brought faith into exaggerated prominence. It made feeling the test of acceptance. It depreciated the life of discipline and made the spiritual combat unmeaning. Without insisting, as the Methodists did, on the necessity of the new birth, it looked upon a sensible conversion followed by the assurance of forgiveness as the normal way in which the grace of God might be expected to work in the soul.

Men imbued with these beliefs turned to the formularies of the Church for support, and found in the Articles and the Homilies a good deal of language which seemed to tell strongly in their favour. The Prayer-book, it is true, told as strongly the other way. But they interpreted the Prayer-book in the light of their own prepossessions. They cared little for its history and tradition, ignored much of its teaching and ritual, and valued it chiefly for the devotional beauty of its language. They thus put out of sight whole regions of Christian thought and practice which had been common enough in the Church of England since the Reformation, and had found expression in the writings of her ablest divines. The conception of the Church as a living visible society, teaching its creeds and celebrating its sacraments through a ministry which derived its powers in due historical succession from the apostles, became obscured. Religion was treated as solely concerned with the personal relations of the individual soul with God. Its social and corporate duties were forgotten, and individual feeling made all-important. Thus by an inevitable tendency common worship became depreciated, the accessories of worship in art and ceremonial neglected, the daily offices treated as the prelude to the sermon, the Holy Eucharist deprived of all idea of worship and celebrated but seldom, the power of the priesthood in absolution energetically denied, and all approach

Relations of the Evangelicals to the Church.

to historical Christianity looked upon as popery. To the Evangelical party the Church of England was nothing more than one among many forms of Protestantism, and dated its religious life from the Reformation. The episcopate was looked upon by them merely as a hierarchy of dignity, and not believed to be of the essence of the Church. The clergy were merely the ministers of the congregation and not the stewards of the mysteries of God. Opinions such as these, being largely negative, ignored rather than denied the doctrines of the Church. With the exception of the exaggerated stress laid upon faith and justification, there was little positive in the Evangelical theology which would not be found in Catholic theology; but there was a great deal in positive Catholic theology and in Anglican theology which would not be found in the Evangelical teaching. Thus, unlike Puritanism from which it was in part descended, Evangelicanism never asked to alter the formularies of the Church in its favour. By simply laying stress upon the statements in Scripture, in the Articles, and in the Homilies which favoured their own views, and treating everything in the Prayer-book and other formularies which militated against them as harmless survivals of effete superstition, the Evangelicals managed with perfect honesty to be as zealous, if not as consistent, Churchmen as any of the disciples of Andrewes and Laud. It is true that, both intellectually and religiously, they were in greater sympathy with the nonconformists than they were with either Latitudinarians or High Churchmen. In many of the societies which they founded they have worked hand in hand with nonconformists with perfect ease, while they have always found it difficult to work either with or under High Churchmen. But, however limited may have been their powers of sympathy and their intellectual grasp of the Church system, the moderation with which they have held their distinctive Calvinist doctrines, and the genuine love which they have evinced for the Church of England, and the splendid work among souls which they have done for her, have vindicated their right beyond all question to be her legitimate children.

During the latter part of the eighteenth century the Evangelical

party were the salt of the Church of England. The connection of their earlier leaders, such as Harvey and Romaine, with Whitefield no doubt stamped them as fanatics in the eyes of educated men, and made them intensely unpopular. As with the Tractarians of the next century, it was a very long time before the gates of palaces and deaneries were thrown open to them. But the years of unpopularity were by no means years of loss. They won their way gradually to importance by the sheer force of piety and character. Fletcher, the saint of Madeley, among his Shropshire colliers, Venn among the rough factory hands of Huddersfield, Romaine among the educated middle-class congregations of Southwark and Blackfriars, triumphed over the prejudices of the religious world by the steady persistence of their preaching and example, in spite of ridicule and even of persecution. The dramatic story of John Newton, saved from the lowest abyss of sin and the horrors of the slave trade to be the friend of the tempted and the director of saints, taught even the most careless the reality of the movement. Thomas Scott struggled manfully through the best years of his life in want and penury on a stipend of £100 a year, but enriched posterity with his commentary on the Bible, which formed the basis of the devotional study of the Scriptures for two generations of Englishmen. The graceful verses of Cowper and the stately periods of Hannah More introduced Evangelicanism into the republic of letters, and made it interesting to people of culture. Joseph Milner, in his Church history, traced out its spiritual parentage among the acknowledged saints and teachers of Christendom. The hymns of Charles Wesley and Toplady gave to English religion that unique consecration which loyalty gains from patriotic songs.

Work of the Evangelical party.

Gradually, as the century advanced, these influences made themselves more and more felt. The cold and apologetic tone which distinguished the religious utterances of the earlier years of the Hanoverian sovereigns gave place to a fervid zeal and an energetic missionary spirit. The personal example of George III. and queen Charlotte did much to bring about a

change in society and at the court. The reaction against the irreligious excesses of the revolution in France greatly assisted the movement among the well-to-do and serious-minded middle class. An active spirit of philanthropy seized upon the English laity. Men awoke to a sense of the national responsibilities entailed by the extraordinary increase in the population and wealth of the country, and the acquisition of a vast colonial empire. In 1781 Joseph Raikes began to organise his system of Sunday schools at Gloucester. In 1784 the first bishop was consecrated for English-speaking races outside the limits of England. In 1799 the Religious Tract society was founded, under the chairmanship of the well-known Evangelical leader, Rowland Hill, for the express purpose of distributing religious tracts among the people. In 1804 the British and Foreign Bible society undertook a similar duty with respect to the circulation of the Scriptures at home and abroad. But the cause into which the Evangelical party threw its whole strength was that of the heathen, and especially of the negro. It is to them that was due the awakening of the national conscience with regard to the slave trade, and the revival of the sense of religious duty towards the heathen. From the end of last century to the present day zeal for the cause of foreign missions has been the honourable characteristic of the Evangelical party. The indefensible character of the slave trade in the eyes of Christian morality had long been recognised by the Quakers, but it was not until William Wilberforce took the lead of the movement for its abolition that, humanly speaking, such a policy had any chance of success. Of good family and position, a favourite with all who knew him, a speaker of singular taste and persuasiveness, the close personal friend of the all-powerful Pitt, a man before whose clear and lofty piety even the snarling curs of political detraction slunk away abashed, Wilberforce brought to the cause of the slave and the fortunes of the Evangelical party, by his leadership, just that social and religious distinction which they most wanted. In the year 1799 the Church Missionary society was founded, chiefly by Charles Simeon and John Venn, with the special object of the evangelisation

of Africa and the east, and quickly became the most important missionary agency of the Church of England—a position which it still retains. By the act for the abolition of the slave trade, passed in 1807, followed by the act for the emancipation of slaves, passed in 1833, the Evangelical party reached the zenith of their renown. By the untiring exertions of Wilberforce and Thornton and Zachary Macaulay, and the little knot of earnest men known as the Clapham sect, it had succeeded in freeing England from the stain of a national sin, and awakening the conscience of the Church to her duty to the millions of heathen whom our commerce and our empire were bringing under the influence of civilisation.

Defects of Evangelicanism, 1800-1845.

For the first half of the nineteenth century Evangelicanism was the dominant power in the Church of England. The leading clergy were mainly chosen from its ranks. The popular clergy almost to a man ranged themselves under its banners. To be religious meant in the language of the day, as the novels show us, to forswear dancing and the theatre, to keep Sunday strictly, to 'sit under' a popular preacher on Sundays, to be sober in dress and staid in manner, to supplement the Bible with Venn's *Complete Duty of Man*, or Wilberforce's *Practical View*, and to be interested in foreign missions. But no sooner had Evangelicanism become popular than it ceased to produce great men. It is astonishing how few men of mark adorned the episcopate from the beginning of the century until the consecration of Samuel Wilberforce in 1845. It is sad to find how few abuses in the Church were remedied, until the energy of the Parliament of 1832 forced the question of reform to the front, and dealt with it trenchantly if not always wisely. The Evangelicals were as unable as the Latitudinarians to produce ecclesiastical leadership and organising power. Individuals such as Charles Simeon exercised a magnetic influence upon those with whom they were brought into contact, but except as individuals they never attempted to grapple with the terrible problems occasioned by the enormous increase of population and the growth of industrial towns. Under their rule dissent

increased with alarming rapidity, and the Church stood still. Their best men devoted themselves to mission work, like John Venn, or set up proprietary chapels in fashionable watering-places like Close at Cheltenham, or Elliott at Brighton. They were marked always with the narrow stamp of a party, and seemed unable to rise to the duty of dealing with the Church as a whole. So, in spite of much earnest and true piety, of much strength of Christian principle and power of self-sacrifice, of much solid philanthropy and splendid missionary zeal, they failed to lead the Church just when it most wanted leadership, and allowed it to sink back in the race, not so much because they were incapable of exertion, as because they did not know how to use their power. As the nineteenth century grew to its adolescence, on all sides but one was heard the noise of the inrush of new ideas. New ventures in politics, new schemes of philosophy, new knowledge in science, new methods in art tripped one another up in the race for the mastery over the intellect and the interests of man. The Church of England alone, amongst the clash of new ideas, remained inert and lethargic, and, as men thought, dying, waiting for the trumpet tongue which, under God's providence, might yet wake her from her sleep.

CHAPTER XX

THE OXFORD MOVEMENT

A.D. 1833-1896

When George III. died in 1820 the Church of England was not materially different in religious ideal or in practical working from what she had been when he came to the throne in 1760. The intense and simple piety of the Evangelical revival had never succeeded in leavening the solid mass of English Churchmanship. Great as was its influence upon individual souls, it did not seriously affect the main current of the life either of the Church or of the nation. The bishops were still amiable scholars who lived in dignified ease apart from their clergy, attended the king's levee regularly, voted steadily in Parliament for the party of the minister who had appointed them, entertained the country gentry when Parliament was not sitting, wrote learned books on points of classical scholarship, and occasionally were seen driving in state through the muddy country roads on their way to the chief towns of their dioceses to hold a confirmation. Of spiritual leadership they had but little idea. Church patronage, which was mainly in the hands of the landowning class, was largely used to make a provision in life for the younger sons of the patron. Round the whole question of patronage the legal doctrines of property had twined their fatal folds, and it had become almost as impossible to prevent the institution of an unfit man into a benefice as it was to eject him from it when he had once been instituted. Faculty pews and rented sittings absorbed the best parts of the churches, and the poor were edged out into the corners of the aisles and the backs

State of the Church, 1820-1833.

of the galleries. The evils of non-residence and pluralities inherited from the Middle Ages still flourished in undiminished luxuriance. The ecclesiastical courts, notwithstanding the great learning and high character of some of the judges who presided over them, were by-words for delay, uncertainty, and cumbrousness of procedure. The living voice of the Church was silent. No attempt was made to collect the opinions of Churchmen on any question affecting the well-being of the Church. No organisation existed to give expression to them. Diocesan and ruri-decanal synods had long ceased to be held; Convocation only met formally at the beginning of each Parliament, and was not allowed to transact business. Cathedrals were looked upon even by Churchmen mainly as interesting museums or picturesque survivals of a barbarous past. Some of them, such as those of Llandaff and S. David's, were actually in ruins. Among institutions, the usefulness of which was believed to lie chiefly in providing means of livelihood for a number of people, abuses of all sorts naturally grew up in rank profusion. Sinecures abounded, and the necessary minimum of duty was grudgingly performed by a succession of ill-paid deputies. In the cathedral churches, however, daily services were regularly maintained. But in most of the buildings belonging to the Church devoted to the worship of God in this country the doors were only open for about four hours in the course of every seven days. When they were opened the services were performed with little attention to the directions given by the Church, and scant sympathy with the spirit of liturgical worship. The sense of corporate worship and of the meaning of a liturgy had almost died out, and the rendering of the services for the most part followed an unintelligent tradition which hardly took account of their structure or meaning, and was in many points opposed to the rubrics of the Prayer-book. The service of the Holy Communion, in particular, had become almost metamorphosed by slovenly customs equally repugnant to the directions of the Prayer-book and the practice of the Church Universal, and probably due more to the rarity of its celebration than to any definite theological opinions as to its nature. In

most parish churches the prominent position assigned to the pulpit, the arrangement of the seats around it, the ill-kept chancels and the mean and dirty appearance of the fonts and altars, pointed to the inferior position occupied by the administration of the sacraments in the mind of the people as compared to that held by the sermon.

When such was the state of things, the wonder was that the clergy were on the whole so good as they seem to have been. No doubt there were many among them whose consciences were singularly unresponsive to their duties. A few of them hunted, shot, fished and drank or gambled during the week like their friends in the army or at the bar, and mumbled through a perfunctory service in church on Sundays unterrified by the thought of archdeacon or bishop. Some of them, where there was no residence in the parish, lived an idle and often vicious life at a neighbouring town, and only visited their parishes when they rode over on Sundays to conduct the necessary services. It would not be difficult to find districts of England and Wales where drunkenness was very common among the clergy. It was the vice of the age, and many of the clergy, especially in remote districts, were no better than their neighbours. Discipline was extremely lax, and the public conscience was not so much shocked at such excesses as it would be now. But such men were by no means in the majority. The bulk of the English clergy then as ever were educated, refined, generous, God fearing men, who lived lives of simple piety and plain duty, respected by their people for the friendly help and wise counsel and open purse which were ever at the disposal of the poor. They had no high standard of clerical duty. They were content to live and to work as their predecessors had done. They had an exaggerated fear of fanaticism in religion, a holy horror of cant. They held a very commonplace view of the nature of their office. If they had thought out their theological position they must have classed themselves almost to a man as Low Churchmen. They had no higher idea of the Church than of a human institution bound up

Character of the clergy.

Their doctrinal position.

in this country with the greatness of the nation, and necessary for the preservation of that happy constitution in Church and State which was believed to be the special gift of God to England. They looked upon themselves primarily as ministers of religion to their parishioners, and not as possessed of high mysterious powers given to them by Christ on their ordination as His ambassadors. They never thought of claiming priestly powers of absolution and sacrifice, whatever the language of the Prayer-book might seem to imply. Their ideas of Eucharistic doctrine did not rise above the receptionist views taught by Calvin. On the other hand, they were still abnormally fearful of Rome and of any approach to Roman doctrine. Most of them considered her to be the very Antichrist spoken of in Scripture, and felt more comfortable when they found differences between the Church of England and that of Rome than when they found resemblances.

Thus the whole tendency was towards Protestant rather than Catholic theology. The fathers and the schoolmen and even the Caroline divines were put aside in favour of Luther, Calvin, Scott and Milner. They accepted to the full the doctrine of the utter corruption of man's nature, and in practice almost limited their doctrinal teaching to the theology of the fall and the atonement. It is true that there were a few clergy and laity scattered here and there through the country who, like John Keble's father, were the true spiritual descendants of Laud and Ken and Wilson and the High Churchmen of the seventeenth century. They believed in the Divine institution of the Church, in the Real Presence of our Lord in the Eucharist, in the reality of the powers of the priesthood. They proved their faith from S. Ignatius and S. Augustine and S. Thomas Aquinas rather than from Cranmer, Calvin or Scott. But as a rule they were scholars and not men of action, and their influence hardly extended beyond their own immediate circle. When the clergy called themselves High Churchmen, as many of them did, what they meant was that they were strongly opposed to dissent, disliked the effusive pietistic methods of the Evangelical revival, and were staunch supporters of Church and king, not that they believed in the doctrines of Laud and

Andrewes. Never perhaps since the Reformation had the clergy of the English Church been so united in belief as they were during the reigns of George III. and George IV. With the exception of the few High Churchmen of the stamp of the elder Keble, and of the larger number of Evangelicals of the stamp of Newton and Venn and Simeon, the clergy held and taught a negative and cold Protestantism deadening to the imagination, studiously repressive to the emotions, and based on principles which found little sanction either in reason or in history. The laity willingly accepted it, as it made so little demand upon their conscience, so little claim upon their life. Under its chilling touch poetry, love, high ideal, noble aspiration, largeness of conception, breadth of theological grasp, historical sympathy, sense of mission, power of sacrifice, faded out of the larger part of the English Church, and left in their places but a decorous sense of duty and a sleepy routine of practice.

One principle, and one only, still remained vigorous and powerful, that of the strenuous maintenance of the alliance with the State. To draw closer that alliance, to enlist the powers of the State on behalf of the Church, was the constant anxiety of Churchmen. To that they were willing to sacrifice what was left of the independence of the Church, to weaken what remained of her spiritual efficacy. When the spirit of the times was clearly moving in the opposite direction, when the Test and Corporation acts were repealed, when Roman Catholics were permitted to enter the army, the navy and Parliament, when it was obvious that a Reform bill was imminent which must place political power in the hands of the middle classes who formed the backbone of dissent, when political thought was all tending in the direction of a somewhat sordid utilitarianism, and applied to all institutions, however venerable, the simple test, What are you doing? the Church of England could apparently do nothing to meet the crisis. Wrapped in her own virtue or indifference, she seemed to be preparing to meet the blow in haughty silence. Since the accession of George III. wars of unprecedented severity had taxed the

Helplessness of the Church in the face of attack, 1830.

resources of the nation to the uttermost. As the result of those wars a vast empire had sprung up beyond the sea. At home an industrial revolution had changed the social problems with which religion and statesmanship had to deal. A religious revolution had torn away from the Church the followers of Whitefield and Wesley, and inflicted upon her the greatest blow which she had sustained since the Great Rebellion. An earnest revival of personal religion had deeply affected some sections of English society. Yet amid the crash of empires and the stress of revolution, unaffected by the losses of the past or the hopes of the future, indifferent alike to religious movement within or political danger without, praised by her friends only for her negative qualities, resting on the arm of the State as the basis of her authority, the Church of England reared her impassive front among the storms which raged round her, sublime in her apathy, unchanged and apparently unchangeable, waiting in patience for the knell of her doom to toll.

Prospects of a revival.

Could these dry bones live? Such was the question which filled the thoughts of every earnest son of the Church of England in those anxious days. To the reverent mind, the answer of the prophet was the only answer possible: O Lord, Thou knowest. Nothing short of the Divine command could make those scattered remnants of a structure once noble and comely fit themselves together again, bone to his bone, in an organised whole. Nothing less than the Divine breath could inspire the dry carcase with spiritual life, and make the Church of England once more stand up upon her feet, active and vigorous, encircled by her daughters in all parts of the earth, a very great army. But here on earth in the affairs of the Church militant, God works by human agency. Men not angels are the recipients of His power, the agents of His will. And so in the crisis of the fortunes of the Church of England, when the official leaders seemed struck with paralysis, humbler men of no authoritative position in the Church felt bound to do what they could in all humility to counteract the dangerous tendencies of the time.

The attempt was made from two very different quarters. Dr. Arnold, the headmaster of Rugby school, brought to the task an intensely religious nature, a firm hold on the central doctrines of the creed, a most vigorous and commanding personality, and a love for Our Lord so deep and strong as to form the dominant motive of his every thought and action. He disagreed with the popular Protestantism of the day, in the great importance which he attached to the training and development of character and in his distrust of religious feelings and experiences. He disliked and dreaded the tendency which he saw increasing in the political world, especially among his own political friends, of severing the connection between religion and government and making the State non-religious. The formula of a free Church in a free State was most obnoxious to him. He believed that the greatness of England depended upon the religious character of its people, which could only be guaranteed by bringing the power of the life and death of Jesus Christ to bear upon each individual soul in the nation. For that he demanded a national Church coterminous with the nation, and was willing to sacrifice much in the way of uniformity of doctrine and historical claim in return for it. But by the word national Church, he only meant the particular organisation for promoting the teaching of religion which a nation might happen to adopt. He expressly repudiated the theory of a Divine society, founded for the whole world on certain definite principles of doctrine and structure by Our Lord Himself, and developed according to His instructions by the apostles and their successors. He looked upon the whole priestly side of Church teaching, such as the doctrines of apostolical succession, the Eucharistic sacrifice, the power of absolution, as simply abuse and corrupt superstition which had been foisted on the gospel by a designing priesthood. Thus, as he himself did not believe in the doctrines of the Church and the sacraments as they were known to history, and attached very little importance to the technical doctrines of justification, good works, predestination and

Work of Dr. Arnold.

His scheme for a national Church.

the like, as they were defined by the Evangelical party, he was personally making but few sacrifices when he urged the concentration of all Christian religious effort within the pale of the established Church, by excluding from her formularies everything except those central doctrines upon which all Christians were agreed, and permitting congregations to adopt any form of worship to express those doctrines which they pleased.

The scheme was in fact an echo of the old schemes of comprehension familiar to former ages, and it inherited their defects. It was purely insular, and could not be transplanted to the colonies without making the government undertake the direct superintendence of religion there, which was just what it emphatically refused to do. It was unworkable even in England, as it incurred the hostility of every one who did not believe that the historical statements of the creeds contained the whole of the Christian faith. It did not even satisfy the end which its author proposed for it, for it deliberately excluded the Roman Catholics, the Unitarians, and the Jews from the national Church, and they together form no inconsiderable part of the nation. As a practical scheme of reform by which the Church should rise to her responsibilities it fell still-born. As a guide to the thoughts and aspirations of earnest men, it played its part in the religious revival of the century. Disciples went forth from the school of Arnold determined to bring the consecration of religion into every act of their daily lives. Inspired by an ardent love for the Person of Our Lord, they threw themselves eagerly into philanthropic schemes for the welfare of man. They were distinguished by a high moral standard of work and duty. The limitations of their theology and the narrowness of their view soon exposed them to hopeless defeat at the hands of the High Church revival. In spite of much adventitious aid from high quarters, they have proved themselves unable to drive the horses of the sun. The development and the revival of the Church and of religious thought has proceeded upon lines opposed both in sacerdotal and latitudinarian directions to all which Dr. Arnold held dear. But nevertheless the Church of England owes to him an undying

debt of gratitude for the revival, in days of apathy and carelessness, of strong religious principle, manly earnestness of conduct, and zeal for social work, which has been characteristic of his best pupils, and is to this day a powerful influence upon the moral life of Englishmen.

The Tractarians.

While Dr. Arnold was thus seeking for the regeneration of England through the agency of an Erastian establishment of religion in sharp contrast to the Christianity of history, men at Oxford were endeavouring to meet the difficulties of the time by the enunciation of totally opposite principles. For some few years past there had been signs that the fire of religious earnestness which was so remarkable in Dr. Arnold and his followers was not without its influence upon old-fashioned High Churchmen. In London under the leadership of Joshua Watson, at Cambridge under the inspiration of Hugh James Rose, men were beginning to have a higher appreciation of the nature of the Church, and to have greater faith in the powers which lay dormant in her bosom could they be stirred into activity. In the common room of Oriel College, the Oxford home of Arnold, was gathered a knot of men whose business it was, in the providence of God, to interpret this vague spirit of inquiry which was abroad, and weld dim and half understood ideals into a definite system of religious doctrine and practice. Of these men, the oldest in years and the most distinguished in academical attainment and public reputation, and the most respected for the winning qualities of his mind and character, was undoubtedly John Keble. As far as there can be said to have been any leader at the beginning of the Oxford movement, he was the man. Brought up by his father as a High Churchman of the school of Andrewes and Ken, he had gained a scholarship at Corpus at the age of fifteen, had obtained a double first-class in classics and mathematics at the age of eighteen, and been elected to an open fellowship at Oriel, and had won the English and the Latin essay before he was nineteen years old. Subsequent years had fully borne out the promise of his youth. A singular sweetness of disposition,

John Keble.

and real humility of nature, combined with a boyish zest for enjoyment and the quick imagination of a poet, made him the most delightful of companions and the truest of friends. The depth of his personal religion, the transparent purity of his life and motives, made him the unconscious centre of strong religious influence. Robert Wilberforce, Richard Hurrell Froude, Isaac Williams, and eventually John Henry Newman and Edward Bouverie Pusey, came under the guidance of his character even more than they did under the sway of his intellect. In 1827 the publication of the *Christian Year* brought these qualities of his mind and soul to bear upon the mind and soul of the Church at large. Its delicacy of thought, its tenderness of expression, its unmistakable spirituality of tone, crept gently, almost unconsciously, into the affections of spiritually minded people, and prepared the ground for the seed afterwards to be sown by the Tracts for the Times. So instinct was it with the Catholic spirit, that although it was written years before the Oxford movement began, only one word was found to require alteration in the light of subsequent controversy, and that alteration was not, in the opinion of the author, a change of the original sense. In 1828 he was put forward by some of his colleagues as a candidate for the provostship of Oriel, but was defeated by Hawkins, chiefly owing to the attitude of Newman and Pusey, who at that time were not intimate with him owing to his absence from Oxford. But soon afterwards, through the influence of Richard Hurrell Froude, who had been elected to an Oriel fellowship in 1826, and was deeply attached to both Newman and Keble, they were brought to know and understand each other. The election of Keble to the chair of poetry in 1831 placed him in closer relations with Oxford residents, and by the time that he had preached the famous sermon on national apostasy in 1833, which Newman always looked upon as the beginning of the movement, all the four chief leaders, Keble, Newman, Froude, and Pusey, were knit together in the strongest bonds of religious friendship, the strongest of all the bonds which can unite men on earth.

The passing of the Reform Bill in 1832, and the advent to power of a Parliament which was eagerly undertaking the reform of the Church from a purely utilitarian standpoint, seemed to the Oxford friends to necessitate some definite action. The trend of political affairs was already unmistakable. The prime minister had significantly warned the bishops to set their house in order. Schemes of confiscation were in the air. In the year 1833 a bill was brought in for the suppression of ten Irish bishoprics by the act of the civil power alone. The spirit of an Erastian utilitarianism which sprang from ignorance of the nature and of the needs of the Church was rampant in political and journalistic circles. To withstand it, there was no strength of knowledge or width of view in the Church itself. The authorities of the Church had no policy to proclaim, no principles to defend, no leadership to offer. Earnest Churchmen felt that the crisis was one which called upon the rank and file to act on their own initiative. Nothing less was wanted than to teach Englishmen from the beginning the real character of the Church to which they belonged, and the greatness of their heritage as her children. On June 14, 1833, Keble sounded the first note of public alarm by his assize sermon at Oxford on national apostasy. In July a meeting was held at the house of Mr. Hugh James Rose at Hadleigh, which eventually resulted in an address to the archbishop of Canterbury (Howley) expressing a general adherence to the apostolical doctrine and polity of the Church signed by 7000 clergy and 230,000 heads of families. In September of the same year appeared the first of the Tracts for the Times, which were short papers dealing with some definite point of Church doctrine or practice, and were written wholly by the Oxford friends. The leading idea present to the minds of the writers was to justify to men's intellects and consciences the sacramental side of the doctrine and life of the Church. The revival of the seventeenth century had been mainly anti-Calvinistic, and had been based on the moral responsibility of man; that of the eighteenth century had been mainly

Reasons for action, 1833.

The Tracts for the Times, 1833-1840.

anti-Latitudinarian, and been based on the love of a personal Redeemer; that of the nineteenth century was to be anti-individualistic, and based on the Incarnate Life of our Lord continued in man through the Church and the Sacraments. The power given to all mankind to become the sons of God through the instrumentality of His spouse the Church, did they realise their privileges, has been the leading principle of the revival of religion throughout the whole Church which has marked this century. It was the special work of the Oxford Tractarians to justify this principle as the true principle of English Christianity, by explaining, to a generation which had to a great extent forgotten both theology and ecclesiastical history, the doctrine of the Holy Catholic Church as it is found in the creed, and by proving it to be the doctrine of the Church of England.

From 1833 to 1840 the movement was in the full swing of eager and unhoped-for success. In 1834 Dr. Pusey, Professor of Hebrew in the university, and canon of Christ Church, definitely threw the weight of his profound learning and academical position into the scale. Up to that time, though in sympathy with Newman, he had not taken an active part in the work. His accession was of incalculable importance. It is said that he was the most venerated man in Oxford. Certainly he was acknowledged to unite a wider grasp and more exhaustive knowledge of theology than any one in Oxford possessed to a character lofty in its ideals, and stern, even to asceticism, in its discipline. At a university real profundity of learning and strength of character will always meet with respectful recognition. In the presence of Dr. Pusey all men felt that they were dealing with one of the great ones of the earth, and were willing to admit that any cause which he had unreservedly adopted as his own must have solid credentials to show. During 1833 and 1834 the activity of the Oxford friends was unremitting. No less than forty-six tracts were published during those years, dealing with almost every controversial point of Church teaching, and bringing a long series of quotations from the best-known Anglican divines in favour of the position taken

Adhesion of Dr. Pusey, 1834.

up. These tracts, collected in a volume, with an introduction by Newman, in 1834, spread the doctrines which they inculcated among all the parsonages in England. Men were once more brought face to face with the questions: 'What is the Church? Is she more than the legal establishment of religion, more than a religious club where individuals may get what they think will do them good? Has she divine credentials, immutable principles? Can she of her own right claim authority to teach? What are her relations to Holy Scripture? Has she inestimable privileges at her disposal? And if so, what is their exact nature?' These questions and questions such as these were dealt with in the early tracts. The answers given to them, illustrated as they were not merely from S. Ignatius or S. Augustine, but from Hooker and Andrewes, from Bramhall and Bull, came as a revelation of a new religion. Wherever it penetrated it stirred men's minds. They could not neglect it. Some were profoundly attracted by it, some as profoundly repelled. At Oxford its success among the younger men was most marked. When face to face with the lofty standard of life and duty as well as the brilliant intellectual ability of the Tractarian writers, the young and generous could not choose but hear. Newman's afternoon sermons at S. Mary's, severe in tone, searching in thought, ever insisted upon conduct as the evidence of faith. At Oxford the movement was recognised to be a great effort after moral perfection, quite as much as after wider and truer intellectual and spiritual conceptions. For a time it carried all before it. In 1835 the ill-judged appointment of Dr. Hampden to be regius professor of Divinity united the vast majority of the university against the government in defence of Church principles. Dr. Hampden was a man who, without intending to be unorthodox, had in sheer confusion of thought laid down principles in his Bampton Lectures which were subversive of the Christian faith, and then could not understand or would not acknowledge that he had done so. The work of proving the real character of the lectures fell naturally upon the Tractarians as the most earnest and most able of Oxford theologians, and so,

Success of the Tracts.

as it were by accident, when Dr. Hampden was appointed regius professor of Divinity, they appeared as the leaders of a united university in protest against the scandal. Meanwhile the tracts were somewhat changing their character and taking the form of solid theological essays, written not so much to attract the attention of the multitude as to educate the opinion of the disciples. Insensibly, as the years went on, Newman stood out more and more as the real leader of the movement. It was round his personality that the younger men gathered. It was his quick intellect that gauged the trend of thought and saw what positions it was necessary to fortify. Pusey and Keble powerfully supported the cause by their writings and by their counsel, but it was Newman who led the way.

Leadership of Newman, 1835.

In the exercise of this quality of leadership Newman found himself in 1836 obliged to deal with the Roman controversy. It was inevitable that this should be the case. The writers of the tracts had for three years been devoting themselves to the establishment, by argument and from history, of the claims of the Church of England to be the true Catholic Church in this country. They were met with the criticism both from Roman Catholics and Evangelicals that Roman Catholicism made the same claim, and, from its greater influence and more distinguished history, seemed, on the face of things, to have a better right to make it. It became therefore as necessary to explain and defend English Catholicism against Roman Catholicism on the one side, as it was against Protestantism on the other. But explanation was not quite so easy nor so convincing. From the very nature of the case it could not satisfy minds which demanded logical perfection of system, and would make no allowance for the incongruities which attach themselves to all systems more or less in the course of historical development, and were irritatingly conspicuous in the Church of England. Besides, the divines of the seventeenth century who had maintained so strongly the catholicity of the English Church and the doctrine of the sacraments had for the most part treated the Roman problem in a very trenchant

The Roman controversy, 1836.

fashion. Writing at a time when the pope was the national enemy and papal tyranny the national danger, they asserted indeed that the Church of Rome was a part of the true Church, so as still to retain valid orders and sacraments, but held her to be so corrupt and diseased as to have justly forfeited the allegiance of good Christians. Some indeed went so far as to look upon her as nothing less than Antichrist. None doubted that the Church of England was the only pure and apostolic branch of the Church in the west. Newman, writing in the freer atmosphere of the nineteenth century, with a deep sense of the imperfections of the English Church, was unable to take so narrow a view. The theory which he enunciated in his Lectures on Romanism and Popular Protestantism was that to which was given the name of the *Via Media*. In its fuller development it has taken something of this form. The Via Media.

It recognised that in the course of ages the sin of man has somewhat marred the purposes of God with regard to His Church, as it has done in other respects. The Church has lost its unity of government. Inter-communion between all its parts has been interrupted. History plainly shows how this has come to be. Presumption, political rivalry, pride, sloth, worldliness, have led to the breaking asunder of old ties, to the advance of false claims. Still below the surface there is a real unity—a unity of faith in the creeds, in Holy Scripture, and tradition, and the decisions of the councils of the undivided Church, a unity of system in liturgical worship and the use of the sacraments, a unity of organisation in the apostolic episcopate. It is but the outward surface which is broken, and that chiefly into three great pieces, owing direct allegiance to Rome, Constantinople, and Canterbury respectively. It is a broken surface which admits of being healed, but only when Rome shall have moderated her claim of monopoly, when Constantinople shall have thrown off her unsympathetic impassiveness, when Canterbury shall have rid itself of its adventitious Protestantism. Owing to causes plainly written on the page of history there is nowhere to be found in Christendom at this moment a logical and tenable theory of the

Church combined with satisfactory method and practice. Men must be content to face the facts as they are. From this point of view the duty of English Churchmen is clear. To them has been entrusted a system which, with all its imperfections both of theory and practice, retains the essentials of the Catholic Church in faith and organisation, and yet combines with it an appeal to Scripture, a rightful use of reason, and an avoidance of superstitious exaggeration which are wanting in the Church of Rome and in the east. The Church has indeed in the past, owing to reasons easily explained by history, suffered the fundamentally catholic character of its formularies to be overlaid and their meaning warped by Protestant interpretations. It has, for similar reasons, handed its independence over too completely to the custody of the State; but such defects are in their nature transitory and capable of remedy. All that is wanted is that English Churchmen should resolutely face the facts, strive by every means in their power to vindicate the true character of their Church, and patiently trust in the promise of the future for the ultimate realisation of their hopes. Granting to the full the anomalies of the situation, might it not be that those very anomalies were capable of being shaped by the Divine will in furtherance of His purpose for His Church, and that the central and isolated position of the English Church between Rome and Constantinople in some things, between Rome and Protestantism in other things, might, especially with a view to the world-wide extension of the Anglo-Saxon race, eventually help to make her the pivot round which the ultimate reunion of Christians would turn? In that case the sacrifice demanded by God of the present generation was clearly to lay foundations upon which other men might build. They were to labour that others might enter into their labours. The condition of success was patience, and trustful hope the breath of Church life.

A theory of the Church such as this recommends itself in its fuller development easily enough to a generation like our own, which sees the Anglican Church planted firmly in all parts of the globe, and the catholic principles which it requires already

recognised in ways never dreamed of by the Tractarians. It is hardly too much to say that before Newman died he saw the theory of the *Via Media*, of which he was the first exponent, grow into a fact. The Anglican Church, with its two hundred and fifty bishops, with its revived worship, its vigorous life, its sober theology, its historical basis, its renewed devotion, rests at any rate upon no paper theory. It is a solid fact of which other forms of Christianity have to take account. Without in the least disguising the anomalies and the shortcomings which still encompass it, the theory of the Anglican Church has been proved to be a working theory, and to correspond with and explain the facts as well as any other theory of the Church. The *Via Media* has justified itself. But in 1837 it was not so. It was still a theory, and little more than a theory. It could point only to a very qualified justification in the history of the past. It met with the strongest opposition from the popular religion of the day, which looked at any concession to the catholic character of the Roman Church, or any claim of a catholic character for the English Church, as treachery to the principles of the Reformation. Even among some of its own friends, who would be content with nothing short of logical perfection, it met with severe criticism on *a priori* grounds. But for the time being the movement was progressing at too quick a pace for such purely intellectual difficulties to have much influence. Both the leaders and the disciples were hopeful and enthusiastic. True it is that in 1839, when Newman was studying the Monophysite question, a terrible doubt came unbidden to his mind, whether after all the parallel between the Monophysite and the Anglican positions was not too close to be agreeable. But the shock was but momentary. He recovered his equilibrium, and, settling himself again firmly in the saddle, prepared, in the ninetieth issue of the tracts, to show by a merciless and judicial analysis of the Articles, that they by no means bound the Church of England to the Protestant side in the way which at that time was commonly assumed.

Subsequent justification of the theory.

Its weakness in 1837.

The publication of tract xc. was the turning-point of the

Oxford movement. Hitherto its success had been astonishing to its friends and to its enemies. It had carried all before it. Hardly any one in authority had spoken against it. At Oxford it had taken strong hold of the ablest and most interesting of the younger men. It had become popular and, academically speaking, almost fashionable. It was now suddenly to be hurled from its pride of place into the lowest pit of ignominy and contempt. For more than forty years in its various developments it was to be the object of unceasing hostility and suspicion on the part of the leaders in the university, of the Church, of the State, and of society. Heads of houses, bishops, ministers, judges, journalists, combined to denounce it and to try and suppress it. Its prominent supporters were accused of disloyalty and conspiracy by sober men in responsible posts. Its rank-and-file were held up to ridicule as empty-headed, frivolous devotees of superstition in the press and in fiction. Its principles and credentials were savagely attacked alike by Erastian politicians, frightened Churchmen, and utilitarian men of the world. Slowly and painfully, amid opposition, discouragement, and desertion, it had to work its way to public recognition as one of many possible theories of the English Church, which at least seemed to have the power of making men earnest and active. Further than that it can hardly be said that organised public opinion has as yet gone. Tract XC. was in reality the occasion, not the cause, of the outbreak of the storm. Dislike and suspicion of the whole movement had been seething for a long time in the minds of men who, like university heads of houses and Church dignitaries, then lived in a little world of their own, and were profoundly unapproachable by new ideas. The publication of the *Remains of Richard Hurrell Froude* after his death in 1837 strongly increased this feeling. A furious article by Dr. Arnold in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1836 had already shown that the Rugby school were animated by similar sentiments. The tract itself merely subjected the language of the controversial articles to a severe analysis from a strict judicial point of view, with the object of

Publication of tract XC., 1840.

Real nature of the tract.

ascertaining precisely the irreducible minimum of statement against Roman doctrine to which the subscribers of the Articles could be held to be legally bound. It did not profess to discuss the bearing of the Articles in the theological system of the Church, but to define the extent of their coercive authority as a matter of law. In fact, it applied the same legal principles of strict interpretation to the Articles in favour of the subscriber, as the law courts afterwards frequently applied in favour of the accused in matters of doctrine, and refused to apply in matters of ritual. Looking at the matter from this point of view, Newman argued that there was no Catholic doctrine, and hardly any theological Roman doctrine, condemned by the Articles; but only popular exaggerations and misrepresentations of Roman doctrine current at the time when the Articles were drawn up.

Most men would now admit that, for the purpose which he had in hand, Newman's argument was in the main sound, but in 1840 the tension of public opinion was too great to admit of the dispassionate treatment of such a subject. Convinced of the inherent dishonesty of the movement, its opponents could see nothing in the tract except proof positive that a conspiracy was abroad to undermine the English Church, and establish once more the supremacy of Rome. All Protestantism flew to arms. The heads of houses, acting on the representation of four tutors, one of whom was Tait, afterwards archbishop of Canterbury, condemned the tract as a dishonest evasion of the Articles. The issue of the tracts was stopped at the request of the bishop of Oxford. Bishop after bishop condemned them in their charges, some in most unguarded language. Controversy raged in Oxford. Newman himself bowed to the storm and withdrew to Littlemore. W. G. Ward of Balliol, a man who combined extraordinary dialectical skill and love of paradox with a boisterous capacity for fun, which made him one of the best-known men in Oxford, threw himself into the fray with more zeal than discretion. He boldly claimed the right to hold all Roman doctrine and remain a member of the Church of

Outbreak of hostility, 1840-1845.

Influence of Ward and the Roman party.

England. He soon became the centre of a knot of younger men, including Faber, Dalgairns, Morris, and Oakeley, who had little of the tender affection for the Church of England as such, which was so characteristic of the leaders of the movement, and were powerfully attracted by the imposing claims and theoretically logical system of Rome. A rift was already visible in the Tractarian forces. The party of Ward was drifting steadily Romewards under the pressure of the attack, as that of Keble and Pusey remained as firmly and conscientiously Anglican. The question of all-absorbing interest was, What would Newman do? The answer was long in coming. Once more in the study of the Donatist controversy the old doubt which had frightened him in 1839 came back. Was the Church of England a part of the true Church after all? This time the doubt did not pass away. Slowly but steadily it took definite shape in his mind. He was urged on by Ward and his party from the inside, and driven on by his opponents outside. A stupid scheme sanctioned by archbishop Howley in 1841 for the erection of a joint bishopric at Jerusalem between the English Church and the Prussian Lutherans seemed to demonstrate a hopeless want of principle in the English Church. The unjust suspension of Dr. Pusey in 1843 by the heads of houses for preaching a sermon on the Eucharist which was little more than a series of quotations from the fathers and Anglican divines, the condemnation of Ward's book on *The Ideal of a Christian Church* and the taking away of his degrees by the university in 1844, the knowledge that the veto of the proctors alone prevented a vindictive attempt to procure his own condemnation by the university for tract xc., all gradually told upon a sensitive and overstrained conscience. In the course of 1844 friends began to fall off. By the summer of 1845 Ward, Dalgairns, Faber, Oakeley, and Christie were gone. In October the long impending blow fell, and Newman was lost to a communion, the vitality and truth of which he had done more than any man to prove.

Hesitation of Newman, 1843-1845.

His secession, 1845.

The catastrophe of 1845 shattered the Tractarian party. It

did not stop the Oxford movement. After the first shock was over men realised that after all it was only one wing of the army which had given way, though it contained the general-in-chief. The staunch fidelity of Pusey, and Keble, and Isaac Williams, and J. B. Mozley, and Church, reassured the timid and despondent, and spurred the noble-hearted to further exertions. It became all the more necessary to prove that the *Via Media* could justify its position by success. The movement somewhat altered its character. It lost the specially intellectual and academical stamp which it had hitherto had. It ceased to be concentrated round a few persons at Oxford. It became less argumentative and aggressive, and more occupied in the practical work of Church organisation and the training of souls. It was more diffused in its activities, wider in its scope. Men like Dr. Hook at Leeds, Mr. Gladstone in Parliament, Roundell Palmer and Mountague Bernard at the bar, Mr. Rogers among civil servants, Mr. Justice Coleridge on the bench, Mr. Hubbard and Mr. Gibbs in the city, though probably none of them wholly accepted all the teaching of the Tractarians, yet felt convinced that the main principles which they inculcated were the true and fundamental principles of the English Church, and threw themselves heartily into the work of defending them and spreading them. To assist this purpose some of them were instrumental in starting the *Guardian* newspaper in 1840. Wilberforce, bishop of Oxford, though personally prejudiced against the leaders, especially Dr. Pusey, began to organise his diocese and set an example of episcopal activity which was only possible in one who believed strongly in episcopacy and the Church. Signs of the revival of church life became everywhere visible. Churches were cleaned, services multiplied and made brighter with music. The Holy Eucharist was celebrated more frequently and with greater reverence. Communions became more frequent and communicants more numerous. Devotional meetings for clergy were held. Greater attention was paid to preparation for confirmation. Societies were formed for promoting the work of the Church at

Widening of the movement into a general High Church revival.

home and abroad. Fresh interest was visible in foreign missions. A real effort was made to cope with the spiritual destitution in large towns. New parishes were formed, new churches built and endowed. The rising appreciation of Gothic art was pressed into the service of the Church, and though many mistakes were made, English churches began once more to look like homes of worship and centres of devotion. The State itself passed somewhat under the influence of the new spirit, and ceased to present an unsurmountable obstacle to Church development. By the Church Discipline act of 1840 a simpler procedure was introduced into the ecclesiastical courts. By the establishment of the Ecclesiastical Commission in 1836 the incomes of bishops and of capitular bodies were fixed, and as far as possible equalised, and funds thus set free for the endowment of new parishes and the assistance of poor benefices. Legal obstacles were removed to the establishment of bishopries in the colonies. By the appointment of Selwyn to the see of New Zealand in 1841, Gray to that of South Africa in 1847, and Broughton to that of Australia in 1836, the Anglican Church was at last able to organise herself on catholic lines outside the shores of England. In 1850 the wrong of 1717 was finally redressed, and the convocations of Canterbury and York permitted to meet regularly to discuss questions of interest to the Church and pass canons subject only to the old constitutional safeguards. No doubt all this energy and life was not entirely due to men who had embraced the doctrines of the Tractarians. From 1845 onwards, and indeed before 1845, we are conscious of many other forces at work in support of Church reform and Church activity which drew their inspiration from quite other sources than those of Tractarianism. There was the Broad Church utilitarian school of Arnold and Stanley and Tait; the Broad Church philosophical school of Maurice and Robertson, the Low Church philanthropical school of Lord Shaftesbury and Henry Elliott, all of whom hated Tractarianism with a bitter hatred, and yet contributed their quota to the growth of energy and religious feeling. But undoubtedly the Oxford movement

Tractarianism remains its motive power.

supplied the religious force and conviction which made the revival what it was, and enunciated the principles to which reform was slowly to accommodate itself. Without it there would have been doubtless a revival of religion and a reform of the Church, certainly sensible and probably striking. That the revival has been of a kind unparalleled in the history of the Church of England for comprehensiveness and intensity is due to the fact that it has been a High Church revival.

No other school of religious thought in England can lay claim to the combination of width and closeness of theological grasp, devotion of personal life, strength of historical position, power of organised work, and richness of artistic expression which form the heritage of High Churchmen, and began to display themselves quite naturally directly the Oxford movement became the dominant feature of the revival. And if the Oxford movement, in its larger sense, was the inspiring principle of the whole High Church revival, Tractarianism, in the sense of the particular view of the Church of England held by the Oxford writers, was still the heart and core of the movement. It was this real unity underlying the obvious and often substantial differences between individuals and groups of those taking part in the revival which gave it its unique force. Since 1845 the High Church revival has never been the work of a party within the Church. High Churchmen have never been like an army organised under definite and authoritative leadership, still less like a parliamentary group, which answers obediently to the crack of the whip. Their common action has been constantly marked by much independence of thought and practice. Still less have they been a disorderly mob, actuated merely by frivolity and passion. They have been rather like one of the great political parties under a constitutional government, men united together in common action by a belief in common principles, held in very varying degrees of intensity and perspective, but clear enough in their main outlines. Men like Dr. Hook or bishop Wilberforce might disagree strongly with the conduct of Dr. Pusey in editing books of devotion drawn from Roman sources or his use of the

confessional. Mr. Butler of Wantage might find himself in agreement with Lord Selborne in distrusting the ceremonial developments of Mr. Mackonochie at Baldwin's Gardens or Mr. Lowder at London Docks; but the differences were those of the application of principles, not upon the principles themselves. Compare for an instant the beliefs held by any one of them as to the divine constitution and purpose of the Church, the character of the Christian ministry, and the nature of the sacraments, with those held by a disciple of Dr. Arnold or a follower of Simeon, and a difference is at once revealed which cuts deep into fundamental conceptions of the religion of Christ.

Hardly had the Church recovered from the shock of the secession of so many of her ablest men than she was called upon to face another blow. In 1850 the judicial committee of the Privy Council gave a decision in the case of a Mr. Gorham, which was understood to declare that the Church of England did not teach the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. This at once raised again all the doubts in many minds which had with difficulty been laid after the events of 1845. Further discussion showed clearly enough that the decision of the court had not gone that length, and that if it had, it was only a parliamentary court and had no authority to bind the conscience in a matter of faith. All that it had said was that the language used by Mr. Gorham was not so clearly contrary to the formularies of the Church as to justify the bishop of Exeter in refusing institution. But when men are under strong mental anxiety it is the trend of affairs more than the facts of a particular incident which brings about crucial decisions. Some felt that the case was a further proof of the inherent Erastianism of the Anglican system, and a fresh batch of secessions, including that of archdeacon Manning, marked the close of the year.

The Gorham case, 1850.

These catastrophes really widened the Oxford movement into becoming a general High Church revival, which contained within itself many different forms of activity and considerable difference of thought, arising from independent views of common

principles. But it made the work of most who were engaged in it, and especially of the more advanced wing, exceedingly difficult. Englishmen became possessed with the belief that every attempt to raise the Church of England above the level of customary tradition was a step in the direction of popery. Especially was this the case with every alteration made in the structure or services of the Church, with the object of bringing them more into harmony with the rubrics of the Prayer-book. The distinction between what was Catholic and what was Roman, common enough in the seventeenth century, was entirely ignored by the agitators and often forgotten by the bishops. High Churchmen lived and worked in an atmosphere of suspicion. The more advanced of them, called at first Puseyites and afterwards Ritualists, were regarded as concealed conspirators and traitors. The revival of the use of carved figures and of the symbol of the cross in the decoration of churches, the provision of a credence table in the chancel, and the observance of the seasons of the Church by different-coloured altar frontals, were all denounced as disloyal practices. The wearing of the surplice in the pulpit instead of a black gown, and the institution of surpliced choirs, caused disgraceful riots in different parts of the country.

Difficulties of the High Church revival.

Gradually, however, by a natural instinct, opposition was centred upon all efforts made to surround the celebration of the Holy Eucharist with dignity and splendour. The doctrine of the Real Presence of our Lord in the Sacrament, with its corollary, the Eucharistic Sacrifice, had never died out of the Church of England. All through the eighteenth century there were many who held it and taught it. But in the days of the Latitudinarian domination it ceased to be represented in official theology and to influence official circles. The Evangelical revival regarded it as the grossest superstition. When, therefore, it was once more urged and defended by the Tractarians as a legitimate part of the deposit of faith, English Protestantism was startled, and the dread of superstition and of popery aroused. Dr. Pusey saw the importance

The Eucharistic controversy.

of the question, and devoted his massive learning to the exact definition of the doctrine, and the vindication of it as the doctrine both of the primitive Church and of the Church of England. But the more able and learned the defence, the more necessary it became in the eyes of those who were convinced of its inherent idolatry to obtain an authoritative decision in favour of their own contention. It could hardly be denied that the language used by the followers of Dr. Pusey, if not by Dr. Pusey himself, was bolder and wider in its scope than that of the seventeenth century divines had usually been, and an attempt was made to draw the line of toleration between the two. The doctrine of Andrewes and Jeremy Taylor was to be pronounced rash but admissible, while that of Pusey and Keble was to be condemned as disloyal and idolatrous. In 1856 proceedings were taken against the Rev. G. A. Denison, archdeacon of Taunton, for the doctrine contained in two sermons on the subject preached in Wells cathedral, and a condemnation of them obtained from the diocesan court. But the whole proceedings were subsequently set aside as irregular, and the question was not argued out on its merits. In 1871 an attack was made upon the Rev. W. J. E. Bennett, vicar of Frome, for some rather unguarded language on the subject of the Real Presence, which he had published in a manual of devotion. The case was fully argued both in the ecclesiastical court of the province and before the Privy Council, but in both courts the language used by Mr. Bennett was pronounced not to be punishable for inconsistency with the formularies of the Church of England.

After that decision it became clear to the leaders of the militant members of the Evangelical party that it was useless to try and get their opponents condemned as heretics for their Eucharistic teaching. It was much easier to procure their punishment as law-breakers for their Eucharistic ceremonial. With the revived belief in high Eucharistic doctrine had naturally come a desire to express it by a more ornate and dignified ceremonial than had been customary. Clergy and ecclesiologists, looking at the Prayer-book to see what were the

Revival of ceremonial.

directions of the rubrics on the subject, found that by the plain meaning of the ornaments rubric all ceremonial which was permissible under the first Prayer-book of Edward VI. was permissible still, if not actually enjoined. When they looked at history they found that many ceremonies authorised by that rubric had, as a matter of fact, been in use in the Church of England until comparatively recent times. If the full ceremonial of the first Prayer-book was permissible, there was an overpowering argument for its adoption. No step which the Church of England could take would more effectually bring before the eyes of men her claim to be in real unity with the rest of the Church Catholic both in the east and the west. The evidence of similarity of service already recognised by the learned would be at once brought home to the ordinary man by the similarity of ceremonial. The parochial clergy, too, soon found that as their congregations became more educated in Church principles and Eucharistic doctrine they began to demand more solemn accessories of worship. So it happened that in the twenty years which followed the secession of Newman, prominent High Churchmen in all parts of the country began to restore the use of the Eucharistic vestments, and in other respects adopt the ceremonial which they believed to be authorised by the ornaments rubric. Unfortunately the bishops, who for the most part had been brought up under Evangelical or Latitudinarian influences, were unable to understand and sympathise with the real objects of this action. They and most of the leading men in England could only see the imitation of popery in what was really an effort in the direction of historical Christianity. Instead of attempting to regulate and control the development of ritual, they declared war against it, refused to listen to arguments for it, denounced its advocates as disloyal to the Church, and lent their assistance to the efforts to suppress it.

A series of cases followed in the law courts, which involved the question of the legality of a very large number of ceremonial usages, some of great importance and some of no importance at all, in which the final decision of the Privy Council was in every point adverse to the High Church party.

The Ritual prosecutions.

Many of the questions undoubtedly were of great intricacy. The Prayer-book made no pretension to be a clear guide in matters of ritual. Its rubrics had been drawn up at different times to meet different emergencies, and had always been framed with an eye to a body of established custom. That body of custom had itself varied very much from time to time. Consequently some of the directions of the rubrics seemed at first sight to be inconsistent with each other. Some had been obsolete for years. Some were exceedingly difficult to construe when compared with other documents of authority. For a great deal of existing custom there was admittedly no rubrical authority at all. These facts would seem to be good arguments for allowing a considerable degree of latitude in ritual matters, but this view did not commend itself to the Privy Council. They proceeded with great pains to make up their own minds as to the most probable and reasonable interpretation of the rubrics, and then forced that interpretation upon the clergy with the utmost strictness. One incumbent was actually condemned for 'excessive kneeling,' and no room for doubt was admitted even in the most intricate question. Decisions of this nature which so courageously refused to evade any difficulty whatever, and were so largely based upon historical presumptions, obviously depended upon their reasoning and statements of facts for their authority before the bar of public opinion. But when those came to be tested by students they were found to contain many serious blunders, to assume some extremely doubtful positions, and to be inconsistent with themselves. Further research revealed further doubts, and it may be safely said that at the present day no lawyer or historian would be found seriously to maintain either of the two different grounds on which the Privy Council declared the use of the Eucharistic vestments to be illegal. It was impossible under such circumstances for the defeated party not to feel that they were being dealt with according to supposed reasons of policy, and were not receiving that justice at the hands of the law which Englishmen are accustomed to expect. The contrast between the laxity with which the Privy Council dealt with

questions of doctrine and the strictness which they applied to questions of ceremonial could not fail to produce serious uneasiness. A sense of injury was added to the sting of defeat, and men began to ask in louder and louder tones what right a purely parliamentary court like the Privy Council had to bind the conscience in matters concerning the faith and worship of the Church.

Growth of a constitutional question.

Thus by sheer bad management and stupidity a grave constitutional question, which bound nearly all the bishops together against the interests of the Church, had been allowed to grow out of a mere question of ritual. But even then the leaders in Church and State could not see their blunder. In 1874 archbishop Tait, with the assistance of the prime minister, Mr. Disraeli, passed an act through Parliament which established another purely parliamentary court to deal with questions of ceremonial in the first instance, instead of the ecclesiastical courts of the two provinces. This naturally produced a crisis. Conscientious clergy all over England refused to admit that such a court had any claim upon their obedience, and were willing to go to prison rather than acknowledge it. Five were actually imprisoned. They were accused of adding lawlessness to disloyalty, but the countrymen of John Hampden did not fear that charge. If lawlessness in disobeying an unconstitutional decision made a patriot in the reign of Charles I., why should it not do the same in the reign of Victoria? The constitutional liberty of the Church is no less sacred a cause than the constitutional liberty of the subject. So men argued. That the State should send clergy to prison for refusing to acknowledge its right to enforce decisions of its own courts upon them in matters of faith and worship, which no one believed to be good law, soon became an unbearable scandal. Bishops began to refuse leave to prosecute, and were supported by public opinion. Archbishop Tait himself saw that he had been wrong. A commission appointed at his instance in 1881 to report on the ecclesiastical courts, pronounced against the existing system; and on his death-bed in 1882 he did his best to leave to his successor a legacy of peace

Imprisonment of clergy.

and toleration. Finally, in 1892, a prosecution instituted against the bishop of Lincoln gave the Privy Council an opportunity to reconsider and practically to overrule some of the points involved in the earlier cases. Since then there has been no fresh ritual prosecution. Thus at the end of a long and painful controversy common-sense and historical truth have won the victory over ecclesiastical narrowness and political distrust. But it has been at great cost. The leadership of the High Church revival, repudiated by the bishops at the time of the publication of tract xc., and by archbishop Tait at the time of the Eucharistic controversy, cannot now be easily regained. Ties of allegiance have been strained, patience exhausted, recklessness in some cases engendered. Even now security and peace mainly depend upon understandings between parties who have misunderstood each other for fifty years. The recovery of authority once laid aside is a difficult process, and requires much care, much breadth of view, and much tenderness of touch. Yet whatever difficulties and controversies the future may have in store, it can hardly again be questioned that the doctrines of the Real Presence and the Eucharistic Sacrifice have a legitimate place in the theology, worship, and devotional life of the Church of England.

Establishment of toleration.

While the Eucharistic controversy was thus threatening to tear the Church of England in pieces, she had been busy proving the intellectual and doctrinal soundness of her position by an exhibition of practical activity unparalleled in the history of the Church. During the fifty years which have elapsed since the secession of Dr. Newman six new bishoprics have been created in England, and no less than sixty-nine abroad, and the work of the episcopate has so much increased that twenty-three suffragan or assistant bishops have been consecrated to assist in its discharge. In the whole Anglican communion there are now more than two hundred and fifty bishops. Owing to the results of the protracted litigation which followed the prosecution of Dr. Colenso, bishop of Natal, it has been satisfactorily settled that the Anglican Church is a purely voluntary

Growth and activity of the Church, 1845-1895.

society in the colonies, and is not subject to the legal obligations which exist in England owing to her alliance with the State, unless they have been specially imposed upon her by act of Parliament. Free development has accordingly been possible without any reference to political considerations. Canada has already, in 1893, revived the title of archbishop, and it is expected that other branches of the Anglican Church will follow its example. In 1867 a conference of the whole Anglican episcopate was held at Lambeth, and is now summoned as a matter of course once in every ten years. The archbishop of Canterbury has grown from being the dignified head of an isolated and comfortable communion, situated on a backwater of religious life, to be the centre of an active world-wide organisation, and bids fair to justify the compliment paid to his predecessor eight centuries ago, and claim his place as *alterius orbis papa*. Since 1852 the convocations of the two English provinces have met regularly for the despatch of ecclesiastical business, and are now assisted in their deliberations by elected Houses of Laymen. Steps are being taken by which a body representative of both provinces may from time to time assemble. In each diocese a conference of duly elected clergy and laity meets to discuss questions affecting the interests of the Church. In some dioceses it has been found useful to call together a synod of the clergy to deal with matters more directly spiritual in their nature. The reports of the numerous societies, which hold their annual meetings in May and June, show an amount of work done and money spent for the welfare of the souls, minds, and bodies of the human race, which, in spite of all imperfections of motive and method, at least proves how great a power is the religion of Christ in the life of the English nation. In such work the Church does not lag behind her competitors. In foreign missions, home missions, the support of the clergy, the relief of their widows, the education of their children, the spread of the Bible, the publication of good literature, the maintenance of hospitals, convalescent homes, orphanages, and countless charities for the sick and the outcast, the poor and the degraded, in the working of clubs and institutes, the planting of public

school missions and university settlements in large towns, the Church has taken more than her full share. Nor have the more directly spiritual agencies been neglected. Public opinion now expects at least in every town parish frequent services, devotional societies and meetings, and in all parishes careful training before confirmation, and instruction for communicants. The training of souls in confession has taken a recognised place among the duties of the priesthood. At the universities special opportunities are given for the instruction of candidates for Holy Orders, and theological colleges exist in many dioceses, at the best of which a training can be obtained for Holy Orders intellectually and spiritually as good as that which any foreign institution affords. Retreats and quiet days for both clergy and laity are common. The religious life has been revived both for men and women. All over the English Church the standard of devotion among religious people is sensibly rising, and the best of the English clergy are probably the best clergy in the world.

Her efforts to teach religion.

But perhaps the most notable efforts made by the Church during the last fifty years have been in the direction of national education and Christian apologetics. Before the passing of the Education act of 1870 the greater part of what was done in the way of elementary education was done by the Church. Since that time she has had to cope with a rival system which draws its resources from public rates, and at the same time keep up with ever-increasing demands of the education department in the direction of efficient teaching and suitable buildings. She has addressed herself to her Herculean task with the utmost zeal. She has doubled the number of her schools since 1870, and now raises more than a million of pounds every year from her own resources for the cause of national education, while in the year 1895 there were no less than 70,000 more children in the Church schools than on the books of all the Board schools put together. If the wisdom of Parliament should prove equal to the task of relieving the voluntary schools from the special disabilities under which they now labour, and

giving the voluntary system and the School Board system equal opportunities, there is little doubt that the Church will keep the hold on the religious education of the country which she now enjoys. In higher education there is still much to be done. In nearly all the public schools of England the teaching is nominally that of the Church, but increasing competition of all sorts and a vicious tradition have greatly impaired the value of the religious training given. But even here progress is real if not so obvious. Greater care is taken with the religious teaching and the chapel services than was formerly the case, and at some schools, notably those built especially for the middle classes, which are associated with the name of their founder, canon Woodard, education in the principles of the Church is a prominent feature. In the universities all official connection with the Church has been taken away except as regards the professors of the theological faculty, and the obligation laid upon colleges to have the service of the Church performed in their chapels by duly ordained chaplains, but it cannot be said that the influence of the Church in the universities is on that account less. Since 1870 colleges have been founded at both Oxford and Cambridge, open only to members of the Church of England. The number of clergy ordained year by year who have had a university training does not diminish, and certainly no one who knows the universities well would say that there is a want of religious earnestness, or any deliberate opposition to religion, among either their older or younger members.

Her efforts to defend the faith.

At no period of the history of the Church has the value of the universities to the cause of religion been more manifest. From their precincts has come the chief part of the constructive work which has enabled Christianity successfully to withstand the shock of the combined attack directed against it from so many different quarters in the middle of the century. The growth of the scientific spirit predisposed men to treat as uncertain what could not be proved by demonstration. The sympathetic study of other religions showed how much they had in common with the religion of Christ. A minute and critical, if sometimes imaginative, investigation into the books

of the Bible threatened to impair the historical evidence for the life and character of our Lord on earth, and render the accepted views of a mechanical inspiration untenable. The spirit of utilitarianism threw its influence against the mysterious in religion, and tended to regard the Church as the enemy of human progress and home of superstition. The faith which Voltaire had tried to conquer with a sneer, and Gibbon had bowed out with stately courtesy, was now to be reduced to a mere human system by Strauss, pronounced unknowable by Huxley, idealised into a poetic dream by Renan, and turned into a moral policeman by Bentham and Mill. On the Church of England has lain naturally the chief burden of the defence, and on some crucial points at any rate her answer is now generally admitted to be complete. It is not likely that future investigation will seriously affect the conclusions as to the authenticity and trustworthiness of the early Christian documents arrived at by the Cambridge school of biblical scholars, or impair the evidence for the regenerating influence of the Church in human society brought into prominence by the Oxford school of historians. It is more difficult to speak with certainty as to the influence of the materialistic spirit engendered by science, but there are not wanting signs of a greater appreciation of the limitations of the scientific method than were formerly admitted to exist both among men of science and other thinkers; and it seems probable that by far the greater part of the irreligion which now exists among educated as well as uneducated people has its roots in the tendency of the age to rid itself of discipline, far more than in honest intellectual doubt.

During the last five-and-twenty years the High Church revival has become the dominant force in the Church of England. The question therefore naturally arises, What is the special gift which it has brought to English religious life? what is the real secret of its power? Each revival of religion in the Church brings into fuller recognition some special side of the mind of God. What is it of His purpose which the Oxford movement in its full develop-

Estimate of the value of the High Church revival.

ment has made its own? The answer will be found in its largeness of view. It sought to take the whole of man and deal with him and not only one portion of him. It did not so much supersede the Caroline, Latitudinarian, and Evangelical movements as supplement them. It aimed at assimilating what was best in them, and adding something of its own. It recognised that man's capacities are intellectual, moral, æsthetic, social, as well as spiritual and humanitarian. It strove to show that in the Catholic Church all these capacities found their appropriate home. It brought to the acceptance of Englishmen a wider scheme of theology and a more comprehensive scholarship than they had yet known. Starting with the object of defending the Bible from rationalistic attack, Dr. Pusey and the Tractarians were led to restore to English theology the true conception of the Church. In the true conception of the Church their successors have found their greatest security against hostile attacks upon the Bible. It laid the basis of Church order and position on historical fact, and claimed for its defence the witness of the ages. It offered a conception of the Church which was at once absolutely loyal to catholic principles and historical facts, and yet wider in scope and more fruitful in possibilities than any theory which had as yet commanded the allegiance of men. It welcomed the increase of knowledge from whatever quarter it might come, as being of necessity a further revelation of the mind and the purpose of God. It pressed into its service all that was beautiful and ennobling in the arts, and taught that the æsthetic gifts of man were to be consecrated and not suppressed. It sought in its teaching about the Church and the sacraments to sanctify common life, and lead the baptized to realise and use the capacities for holiness which they already possessed. The power to become the sons of God, it said, belonged not to the predestined or the converted few, but to the whole company of the baptized through their union with the living Christ, the Head of His Church. As a member of that Church, each one, however humble, had part and share and sympathy with the faithful who had gone before him, and fellow-worship with all

the company of heaven. It offered to the devout and spiritual a special vocation of obedience, of self-discipline, of retirement, of service, in the consecrated life of the cloister. It applied itself to the training of individual souls in the spiritual combat. It awakened afresh the sense of corporate duty between man and man as fellow-members of the family of Christ. It took man as he was, and consecrated all that was strongest in him. No man has become the weaker for submitting himself to the Oxford movement. There are many whose moral failure dates from their renunciation of it.

Its historical meaning.

From the point of view of history the Church revival of the present century is seen to be nothing more than the complete reaction against the Protestant movement of the sixteenth century. From the moment that it became clear that Protestant theology and discipline were not going to oust the Prayer-book from the religious life of England in the reign of queen Elizabeth, that reaction was certain. English Churchmen could not continue long to use the Prayer-book and remain either Lutheran or Calvinistic. The reaction began with Hooker and Bancroft and the canons of 1604. It was developed by Andrewes, and Herbert, and Donne, and Laud, and Jeremy Taylor. It reached considerable proportions in the days of Sheldon, and Cosin, and Ken, and Wilson. But it had neither time nor opportunity fully to develop its own principles, either in its theology, its worship, or its relations to the State. The long political war with Roman Catholicism, which lasted from 1570 to 1745, made its conception of the Church insular and narrow. The influence of Puritanism made it often minimise its teaching of the sacraments, and shrink from asserting its rights in the matter of worship, in the interests of peace. The political difficulties under which it laboured made it too ready to seek the assistance of the State and rely too little on its own spiritual powers. Thus the Caroline revival was far from being complete when the whole movement was checked by the Latitudinarian and Evangelical influences of the eighteenth century. The Tractarians took up the movement where Ken

and Sancroft had laid it down, and in their hands and in those of their successors it has naturally developed, in the broader knowledge and freer life of the present day, to a clearness of statement, a largeness of view, a boldness of claim, and a width of sympathy which earlier ages could with difficulty have accepted.

If the revival of the present century means anything at all, it means the complete restoration of the balance to the point which it had reached when foreign Protestantism began seriously to influence the English Reformation. It means the restoration of the Church of England to the position which it held when Edward VI. came to the throne. It means the repudiation of the teaching and the systems of Zwingli, Luther, and Calvin, and the claim of legal, historical, and actual continuity with the primitive and the mediæval Church. It means that the Church of England is reformed because it has purged itself of mediæval abuses, restored the Bible to its proper place in the religious life of the Church, adopted vernacular services, and declined to recognise the claim of the pope to be universal bishop. But it means none the less that she is essentially catholic in the fulness of historical right and regained practice. Already there are not wanting signs that this truth is forcing itself on the world. In all parts of the Church there is a movement towards England as to a common centre. Among the eastern Churches, venerable for their sufferings and their stedfastness, this has long been visible. Quite lately a disposition has manifested itself among serious students in France to study our position and claims in a far more sympathetic manner than has hitherto been customary. True it is that the picture the Church of England presents to those outside her communion is one singularly open to criticism. There is much of internal dissension, of irreconcilable opinion, of want of grip on fundamental principles, of eclecticism in practice, of weakened discipline, of indifference to the claims of truth, of laxity of standard among her members. There is much which is patently wrong in the actual working of her system. There is much which requires explanation in her history and formularies. In 1896, as in 1846, patience is still

the first of Anglican virtues and perseverance the first of duties. But to us at the end of the century they come no longer clothed in the sober garb of resignation, but bright with the promises of half-won victory. When the bishops of the Anglican Church meet in 1897 to celebrate the planting of the Church among our forefathers by S. Augustine of Canterbury thirteen centuries ago, they will find the Church of England, with all her imperfections, not unworthy of her parentage and her history, and ready to face the coming century with undiminished hope.

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